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BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS

CHARLES WILLIAM PEARSON

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Review.

21 October, 1909.





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LITERARY AND BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS

A VOLUME OF PAPERS
BY THE WAY

BY
CHARLES WILLIAM PEARSON

AUTHOR OF

"THE CARPENTER PROPHET"

"THE SEARCH AFTER TRUTH"

"A THREEFOLD CORD"



BOSTON
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POETRY

POETRY

Poetry is one of the fine arts, and its ultimate basis is that quality in the soul of man which will not let him rest in the useful and the material, but leads him on to seek also the beautiful and the spiritual. To illustrate by analogy in the simplest way, men are not content to cultivate only potatoes and cabbages, but they also want lilies and roses, and not content with clothing which is merely a protection, but insistent that it shall also be an adornment. They are not satisfied with houses which afford warmth and shelter merely, but they want also beauty and refinement.

In like manner in the communication of their thoughts, it is not enough to express them with clearness and precision; there must be added to these beauty and sympathy. Poetry then rests upon the same basis as Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, and Music, and even more than any of these noble arts reflects the general character of the race that produces it. As the race rises, its poetry rises also. Every increase in knowledge, every refinement in manners, every growth of justice, of kindness, of human sympathy, every new perception of spiritual truth is speedily represented in the poetry of the nation.

The names given to the poet are significant, and the fact that in every nation they are the same is also full of meaning. What are these names? The poet is the seer, who pierces some of the veils of sense and of futurity; he is the singer, who gives melody and beauty to the language; he is the prophet, who must speak because of the burden upon his heart. In old

English he is called "the maker" and that indeed is the meaning of the word "poet," because he creates, and makes what is most valuable and permanent in the world, not clothing, or houses, or machinery but faith and hope and charity.

It is for this reason that one of the noblest of modern poets has said

" Blessings be with them and eternal praise
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,
The poets who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays."

Now if this be true that the poet according to the degree in which he deserves the name sees into the nature of the world in which he lives, that he is able to interpret this world to others, and is able to produce nobler thoughts and feelings, his function is surely a most exalted and precious one, deserving the respect and admiration which all past ages have given to it; and it is not altogether a healthy symptom that there should be any appearance of neglect or indifference regarding poetry in our day. People are indeed justly intolerant of spurious poetry, as they are of spurious religion, and for the same reason, that the higher and more important a subject is, the less men like to see it travestied and degraded. Any sensible man prefers plain, clear prose to mechanical or affected verse, and would rather read language in a simple and natural order than language twisted, dislocated, juggled with, as it is in some stuff called poetry.

Cowper says:

" If sentiment be sacrificed to sound,
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judge a man of sense can scarce do worse
Than caper in the morris dance of verse."

But if sentiment is not sacrificed to sound, if the soul is full of a passion for truth and beauty to which prose can give no adequate expression, then the world concurs in the benediction just quoted from Wordsworth.

"I had rather be a kitten and cry 'mew' than one of these metric ballad mongers," said Shakespeare; and yet he did not stop writing poetry, but only tried to substitute good for bad, and the world thanks him for Lear and Hamlet as the result.

And we all of us, even the most busy and the most prosaic, value our poetry more than our prose. Indeed, we are most of us poetically richer than we are aware of and would be surprised if we were to take an accurate stock of our poetic wealth. Most of what any of us can quote is poetry, the poetry of the Bible, the poetry of the hymn book, of sentiment, of heroism, of humor, the poetry learned in childhood, or that which we have gone to for relief and inspiration amid the cares and sorrows of life. It is wonderful how much poetry the average man or woman has in conscious, or more frequently in unconscious, memory. A hymn is sung in church or social meeting. You had never committed it to memory and did not know that you knew it, but you join in the singing, and as you proceed each line suggests its successor, and you discover that it had been appropriated by your mind without any conscious effort on your part.

Our age is pre-eminently a scientific and a commercial age. Our colossal enterprises are the construction of railways, steamships, telegraphs, complex and wonderful machinery of every sort. It is the age of political equality, of representative government, of clear reasoning and skillful organization. And all

these are very wonderful and admirable. But I think we shall not give up the spiritual side of life for these material and external triumphs. I do not believe that we are drifting into utilitarianism, but that our religion and our poetry, will continue to grow and thrive, and, as in the past, absorb all outward elements and render them tributary to piety and song.

In fact, although our century is so remarkable for its scientific discoveries and its mechanical achievements, it is not the less an earnestly religious and spiritual age. The poetry of an epoch is always the best index of its spirit, and our modern poetry is on the whole remarkably pure and devout. It reflects the increased purity and deeper sympathy of our times. In the great representative modern writers, of both prose and poetry, there is a delicacy of thought and language far beyond that of the last or any preceding century in English literature. What a contrast do Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot make to Richardson, Fielding, Smollett and Sterne in these respects? What a change in these particulars is seen when we compare Longfellow, Whittier, Wordsworth and Tennyson, with Pope, Burns and Byron!

Nor is the modern poetry merely more moral, it is also more spiritual. Milton's great epic was written to "justify the ways of God to men," and nobly from the point of view of his time did he accomplish his great aim. Yet *Paradise Lost* with all its artistic and moral excellencies, with its matchless variety and power of verse, with its sublimity of imagination, its awful warnings against sin, its noble lessons of duty, and its glorious praises of justice and loyalty, is yet lacking in one element, that of tenderness. God is the Creator and Judge rather than the Father and Friend of man.

Paradise Lost reflects the stern Puritan theology of its author's time. It was an age of creed-makers, and the intellect had unduly and injuriously triumphed over the intuitions and affections of men.

The next great theodicy in our literature is Pope's *Essay on Man*. This too was written to "vindicate the ways of God to man." As to Pope's sincerity and success there have been marked differences of opinion. His *Essay* has been distrusted as an attempt to substitute reason for revelation, and its opinions arrayed in their most brilliant rhetorical beauty have been compared to venomous serpents lurking beneath the fresh and fair flowers. On the other hand those who think it the natural and necessary ally of religion have prized it highly as a treatise on natural religion. Pope was the favorite poet of the greatest of metaphysicians, Kant, and the eminent Scotch professor of Moral Philosophy asserts that the *Essay on Man* is "the noblest specimen of philosophical poetry which our language affords; and with the exception of a very few passages, contains a valuable summary of all that human reason has been able hitherto to advance in justification of the moral government of God." The point in which these opinions agree is the one I wish to emphasize, namely: that the *Essay* is a philosophical argument and not an emotional appeal. In this respect it is quite unlike the nineteenth century poetry. Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning and Longfellow appeal much less to the reason than to the spiritual intuitions. They do not antagonize or ignore reason, they simply do not make it their criterion of truth. They enter more deeply into sympathy with the central truth of Christianity, that we are saved by faith and hope and love. They do not strive against reason, they simply

seek to re-enforce it by other faculties and to go beyond it into religion, which, without aid, it is powerless to explore.

Modern English poetry is thus a sublimer "Vision of Christ" the Elder Brother, the Teacher of the law of love, the spiritual leader and ideal of man, than the English poetry of any preceding epoch. It has none of the jangling and bitterness which disfigures so much of the earlier religious poetry and even appears in *Paradise Lost*. No modern poet would class together "embryos and idiots, eremites and friars, white, black and gray," and send them all together to the limbo of things "abortive and unkindly mixed." Whittier better expresses the modern feeling that with all diversities of method and opinion, with all varieties of vesture and symbol, there is a great underlying unity of aspiration and purpose throughout Christendom as he sings,

"O Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine."

The Son of Man is the central figure of modern poetry. Milton's first vision of him is in the Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity. The central thought of the poem is that his birth is the death of Paganism, that his light drives away heathen darkness, and his truth heathen error. Now that he has appeared

"The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiv-
ing;

Apollo from his shrine
Can do no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving."

The poets ignore time and secondary causes. They see into the purposes of God with whom "one day is as a thousand years," and represent that as done suddenly and by one act which is really accomplished slowly and by many subsidiary agencies. So Mrs. Browning similarly represents Christ's triumph but places his victory over Paganism not as taking place at his Nativity but in that dreadful moment when amid his last agony he said "It is finished." In her poem *The Dead Pan* she says:

"'Twas the hour when One in Zion
Hung for love's sake on a cross —
When his brow was chill with dying,
And his soul was faint with loss;
When his priestly blood dropped downward,
And his kingly eyes looked throneward —
Then, Pan was dead."

The supreme expression in our century of the struggle between faith and doubt in the soul of man is Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. The alternations of hope and despair in their intensity are like the spiritual wrestlings of Paul and Luther, of Bunyan and Wesley. The heart rebels against a materialistic science. "We are not cunning casts in clay." The soul's intuitions affirm that we are sons of God.

"If e'er when faith had fallen asleep
I heard a voice, Believe no more,
A warmth within the heart would melt

A freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath, the heart
Rose up and answer'd, I have felt."

Tennyson teaches that "love is Creation's final law." He sees that there is

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves;"

and in the meantime while the work is yet incomplete his trust is in that

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove."

This too is the burden of Browning's Saul:

"Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this
man
And dare doubt He alone will not do it who yet alone
can?"

The poets are not less emphatic in teaching the duty of love to man. Lowell makes Jesus say that he is the truest disciple and best remembers his Lord's last command who most loves and helps his neighbor:

"The holy supper is kept, indeed,
In what so we share with another's need;
Not what we give but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three;
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

We have spoken of faith and love. There is another member of the great trinity of Christian graces — Hope. The poets trust that

" Good
Will be the final goal of ill,
That what God made best can't end worst
Nor what he blessed once prove accurst."

Even upon the dark shadow of Sin they seek to cast some light. The conclusion of Longfellow's Golden Legend, his great poem of mediæval Christianity, is in these striking lines as he sees the personification of all evil baffled in his designs:

" It is Lucifer,
The Son of mystery;
And since God suffers him to be,
He, too, is God's minister,
And labors for some good
By us not understood!"

It is the purpose of the greater poets to point men to higher destinies, to teach them to live pure and noble lives here, and to look forward with faith and hope to a greater glory hereafter, when they shall be satisfied with the divine likeness.

The lark that makes his lowly nest upon the ground, and yet sings as he rises heavenward, "as though he had learned music and motion of an angel" is a fit emblem of a Christian poet, for he is a

" Type of the wise, who soar but never roam,
True to the kindred points of heaven and home."

Poetry is "the vision and the faculty divine." It not only points out the celestial city, but it cheers and beautifies the pathway to it. To the Psalmist the heavens declared the Creator's glory. To the modern poet "the seasons as they change are but the varied God." To the eye of the seer the world is symbolical, and he who will consider not the lilies only but "the

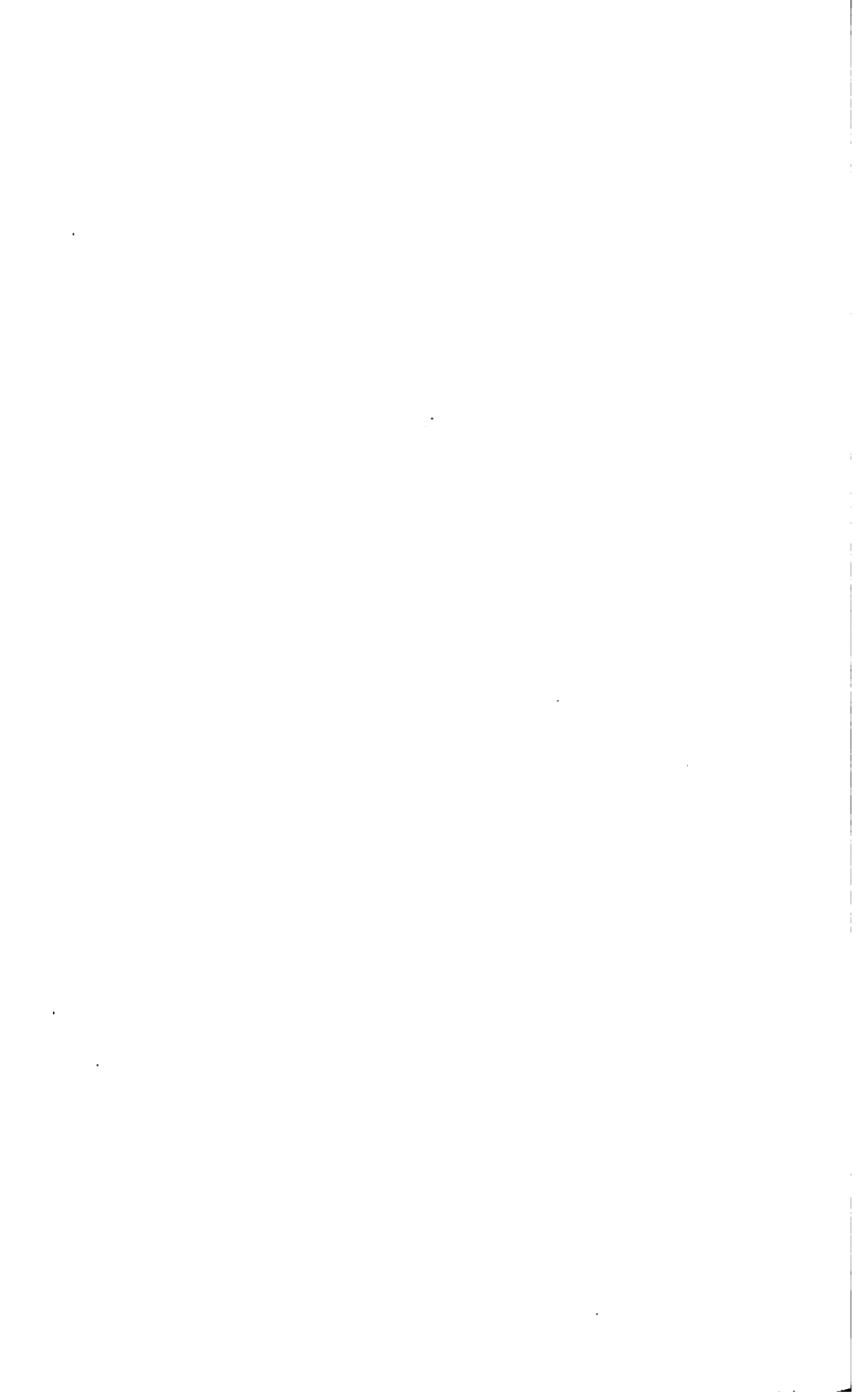
grass which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven" will find it full of beauty; for as the gifted English singer who is so nobly carrying forward the best traditions of our literature says:

"The poet gathers fruit from every tree,
Yea, grapes from thorns and figs from thistles, he,
Plucked by his hand the meanest weed that grows,
Towers to the lily, reddens to the rose."

Poetry as it is the first and noblest may also be the last of the fine arts. When our present tongues have ceased and our present knowledge has vanished, when painting, sculpture, and architecture shall seem but as the games of children, men in the likeness of angels as they walk by the river of the water of life and stand amid the splendors of the city of pearl and gold, will still treasure poetry; for will they not sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

"Thus they in heaven above the starry spheres
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spend."

EARLY AMERICAN POETRY



EARLY AMERICAN POETRY.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Sydney Smith sneeringly asked, "Who reads an American book?" and writers less ignorant and less prejudiced than he are often astonished at the slow growth of our national literature. America had been settled by the English two hundred years before any American wrote either a great novel or a great poem and this is certainly surprising when we consider that the English colonies in America were established when the mother country was at the very height of its literary glory.

The Virginia colony brought to the New World all the splendid ideals and aspirations of the age of Sidney and Raleigh, a time when men had "a great flame of desire to attempt some notable thing." Virginia was settled by cavaliers, and Shakespeare gives us the spirit of the cavalier when he makes Percy of Northumberland say: "If it be a sin to court honor, I am the most offending man alive."

An even stronger inspiration brought men to New England.

"The breaking waves dashed high
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against the stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed.
And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moor'd their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Amidst the storm they sang
And the stars heard and the sea;

And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free.
What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine."

The first English settlers came to this country when "all the English Muses were in their prime." The cavalier immigrants were of the stock that had produced Shakespeare; the Puritans were of the sect from which Milton arose. They brought to the New World everything that was good and great in the civilization of the old. In the ten years from 1630 to 1640, fleet after fleet of ships brought the wealthiest of the Puritans with the choicest breeds of horses and cattle and all the elements of material prosperity. And every fleet also brought with it a great company of learned and pious clergymen, each carrying with him as his chief treasure a choice selection of Hebrew, Greek, Latin and English books. Among the first settlers of New England there were more college graduates in proportion to population than in any part of Old England, and these good men were above all things solicitous to maintain and encourage learning. They required that in every town of fifty householders there should be a common school, and in every town of a hundred householders a grammar school with a teacher competent to fit youths for the University. The great Winthrop colony arrived in Massachusetts in 1630, and only six years later founded Harvard College, or as Professor Moses C. Tyler picturesquely expressed it, "while the tree stumps were as yet scarcely weather-browned in their earliest harvest fields and before the nightly howl of the wolf had ceased in the outskirts of

their villages, they had made arrangements by which their young men could study Aristotle and Thucydides, Horace and Tacitus and the Hebrew Bible."

That great literature was not produced in this country for the first two hundred years of its history was not for lack of learning, nor yet for lack of appreciation and effort. I quote again from Professor Tyler's great History of American Literature: "A happy surprise awaits those who come to the study of the early literature of New England with the expectation of finding it altogether arid in sentiment, or void of the spirit and aroma of poetry. It is an extraordinary fact about the grave and substantial men of New England, especially during our earliest literary age, that they all had a lurking propensity to write what they sincerely believed to be poetry — Lady Mary Montague said that in England, in her time, verse making had become as common as taking snuff: in New England, in the age before that, it had become much more common — since there were some who did not take snuff. It is impressive to note as we inspect our first period that neither advanced age, nor high office, nor mental unfitness, nor previous condition of respectability, was sufficient to protect any one from the poetic vice. However, as respects the poetry which was perpetrated by our ancestors, it must be mentioned that a benignant Providence has its own methods of protecting the human family from intolerable misfortune; and that most of this poetry has perished. Enough, however, has survived to furnish us with materials for everlasting gratitude, by enabling us in a measure to realize the nature and extent of the calamity which the divine intervention has spared us."

This opinion of Professor Tyler shall be my excuse

for passing over a great number of minor writers and coming at once to Mistress Anne Bradstreet, a writer who in her own day enjoyed extraordinary popularity and to whom even modern critics award generous praise.

Anne Dudley was the daughter of Thomas Dudley, former steward of the Earl of Lincoln, who came to this country in the year 1630. Thomas Dudley was a very able and active man of affairs, and four years after his arrival succeeded Winthrop as Governor of the Massachusetts colony. A long rhyming epitaph written in accordance with the fashion of the time, contains these lines:

"In books a prodigal, they say,
A living cyclopædia;
Of histories of church and priest
A full compendium at least,
A table talker rich in sense,
And witty without wit's pretense."

Dudley wrote as well as read, and continued the practice of occasional versifying to the end of his long life. The following vigorous and pious lines, summing up his life and expressing his belief and hope, were found in his pocket after his death:

"Eleven times seven (years) lived have I,
And now God calls, I willing die:
My shuttle's shot, my race is run,
My sun is set, my deed is done;
My span is measured, tale is told,
My flower is faded and grown old:

* * *

Farewell, dear wife, children and friends,
Hate heresy, make blessed ends;
Bear poverty, live with good men,
So shall we meet with joy again."

Obviously, the daughter of such a father was predestined to piety and poetry.

At the age of sixteen Anne Dudley was married to Simon Bradstreet, nine years her senior, a graduate of Emanuel College, Cambridge, a grave, even tempered, tender-hearted man, who feared God and feared no one else. Mr. Tyler says: "The coming away from Old England to New England was for many of these wealthy emigrants a sad sacrifice of taste and personal preference, and for none of them, probably, was it more so than for this girl-wife, Anne Bradstreet, who, with a scholar's thirst for knowledge and a poet's sensitiveness to the elegant, would have delighted in the antique richness and mellow beauty of English life, as much as she recoiled from the savage surroundings, the scant privileges, the crude, realistic and shaggy forms of society in America." It was, indeed, a change for her to leave the stately castle of Sempringham, of which her father had been steward, to occupy a log cabin in the wilderness. In an autobiographic sketch, she writes: "When I was married and came into this country, I found a new world and new manners, at which my heart rose. But after I was convinced it was the way of God, I submitted to it." She had eight children, or to use her own poetic figure:

"I had eight birds hatched in the nest;
Four cocks there were and hens the rest;
I nurst them up with pain and care,
For cost nor labor did I spare,
Till at the last they felt their wing,
Mounted the trees and learned to sing."

Obviously Anne Bradstreet's life was a very busy one; but so strong was her native bent for study and

poetry that she found time amid all her household cares to write very voluminously. Her learned husband had brought a library of fifty choice books with him, among them the History of the World which Sir Walter Raleigh wrote while a prisoner in the Tower of London. It was still the fashion to write Chronicles in verse and Anne Bradstreet had abundant precedent for her bold enterprise of turning Raleigh's volume into rhyme. She called her poem *The Four Monarchies*. It is written in heroic couplets and the versification is crude and hasty. The following specimen gives an account of the victory of Alexander the Great over the Persian King, Darius.

"So on he goes Darius for to meet
Who came with thousand thousands at his feet;

* * *

For this wise King had brought to see the sport
Along with him the ladies of the court.

* * *

A thousand mules and camels ready wait
Loaden with gold, with jewels and with plate,
But when both armies met he might behold
That valor was more worth than pearls or gold.

* * *

Two hundred thousand men that day were slain,
And forty thousand prisoners also ta'en."

Professor Tyler comments upon the poem as follows: "Heavy as the poem seems to us, to the first generation of her readers, doubtless it seemed the most precious issue of her genius. It commended itself to the sturdy and careful minds of her Puritan constituency as useful poetry. They could read it without twinges of self-reproach; it was not trivial or antic or amusing — it was not poetic fiction but solid fact."

Her solid Pegasus always keeping safely upon all fours, Mistress Bradstreet also wrote upon the Four Elements, Fire, Water, Earth and Air, upon the four temperaments or Constitutions of Man, the choleric, the sanguine, the nervous, and the lymphatic, upon the four Ages, Childhood, Youth, Manhood and Old Age, and upon the four Seasons of the Year.

When her hymns and shorter miscellaneous pieces were added to the five long poems above mentioned, the result was a royal octavo volume of four hundred pages. This was published in London in 1650, with the title of: *The Tenth Muse lately sprung up in America; or Several Poems compiled with great Variety of Wit and Learning* — by a Gentlewoman in those parts.

A publisher's praise is under the suspicion of self-interest, but no such abatement attaches to the eulogy of the great Cotton Mather who in his *Magnalia* says, "America justly admires the learned women of the other hemisphere, but she now prays that into such catalogues of authoresses, there may be room now given unto the daughter of our Governor Dudley and consort of our Governor Bradstreet, whose poems divers times printed have afforded a grateful entertainment unto the ingenious and a monument for her memory beyond the stateliest marbles."

In America there was a universal chorus of praise. Even that surly old cynic and woman hater Nathaniel Ward (who said of a woman of fashion: "I look at her as the very gizzard of a trifle, the product of a quarter of a cipher, the epitome of nothing") was rapt in admiration of Anne Bradstreet and in some prefatory lines to the book makes Apollo swear

"By Chaucer's boots and Homer's furs,
Let men look to't, lest women wear the spurs."

A second edition of the Tenth Muse was published in 1678, six years after the author's death. It contains her last and best poems, among them the famous "Contemplations." Her home was at Andover, Mass., on the noble Merrimac river, and from it one autumn evening she drew an inspiration worthy of Chaucer or Burns or Tennyson or any of the poets who have found "tongues in trees and books in the running brooks." In a stately measure borrowed from Phineas Fletcher she writes:

"Some time now past in the autumnal tide,
 When Rhœbus wanted but one hour to bed,
 The trees all richly clad yet void of pride,
 Were gilded o'er by his rich golden head,
 Their leaves and fruits seemed painted but were true;
 Rapt were my senses at the delectable view.

* * *

Then on a stately oak I cast mine eye,
 Whose ruffling top the clouds seemed to aspire;
 How long since thou wast in thine infancy?

* * *

Hath hundred winters past since thou wast born?
 Or thousands since thou brok'st thy shell of horn?
 If so, all these as naught eternity doth scorn.

* * *

Under the cooling shadow of an elm
 Close sat I by the goodly River's side
 Where gliding streams the rocks did overwhelm;
 A lonely place with pleasures dignified.
 I once that loved the shady woods so well,
 Now thought the rivers did the trees excel,
 And if the sun would ever shine there would I dwell.
 While musing thus with contemplation fed,
 And thousand fancies buzzing in my brain,

The sweet-tongued Philomel perch'd o'er my head
And chanted forth a most melodious strain,
Which rapt me so with wonder and delight,
I judg'd my hearing better than my sight,
And wish'd me wings with her a while to take my
flight."

Anne Bradstreet added the grace of modesty to merit and in a prologue to her volume she says to her poetic contemporaries:

"Ye high flown quills that soar the skies,
And ever with your prey still catch your praise;
If e'er you deign these lowly lines your eyes,
Give thyme and parsley wreaths; I ask no bays.
This mean and unrefined ore of mine
Will make your glistening gold but more to shine."

Anne Bradstreet was a genuine poet, and to the best of her ability under difficult conditions beat out the music that was in her; she is likely to be remembered and honored more and more as the centuries pass, as the first in the long line of American singers. Her works were reprinted in 1758 and again in 1867. But beside the editions of her works securely protected in many libraries against fire, neglect or decay, she has left still another evidence of her poetic and moral vigor in the character of her descendants, and to the student of heredity it is interesting and instructive to find that from Anne Bradstreet's line have sprung Channing and Dana and Wendell Phillips and Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Anne Bradstreet represents the more beautiful, gentle, and tender side of Puritanism. Michael Wigglesworth, her contemporary, represents its darker, more forbidding and terrible aspects. Michael Wigglesworth was born in England in 1631 and was brought

to this country by his father as a child of seven. He graduated at Harvard, and for a time served there as tutor; and in 1656 became pastor of the church at Malden, which he served for almost fifty years until his death in 1704. Mr. Tyler says: "Wigglesworth was the explicit and unshrinking rhymers of the Five Points of Calvinism; a poet who so perfectly uttered in verse the religious faith and emotion of Puritan New England that for more than a hundred years, his writings had universal diffusion there, and a popular influence only inferior to that of the Bible and the shorter Catechism. No one holding a different theology from that held by Wigglesworth can do him justice as a poet without exercising the utmost intellectual catholicity. There was in him the genius of a true poet; his imagination had an epic strength; it was courageous, piercing, creative, yet in his intense pursuit of what he believed to be the good and true, he forgot the very existence of the beautiful; finally, not having served his poetic apprenticeship under any of the sane and mighty masters of English song, he was incapable of giving utterance to his genius, except in a dialect unworthy of it. His verse is quite lacking in art, its ordinary form being a crude, swinging ballad-measure with a shrill reverberating clatter, that would instantly catch and please the popular ear, at that time deaf to daintier and more subtle effects in poetry."

The masterpiece of Wigglesworth's genius is a lurid and awful poem which bears the name of "The Day of Doom; or, a Poetical Description of the Great and Last Judgment." In composing it the poet seeks inspiration only from Christ. He says:

"O dearest, dread, most glorious King,
I'll of thy justest judgment sing:

Do thou my head and heart inspire
To sing aright as I desire.
Thee, thee alone I'll invoke,
For I do much abominate
To call the Muses to mine aid:
Which is the unchristian use and trade
Of some that Christians would be thought,
And yet they worship worse than naught.
Oh, what a deal of blasphemy
And heathenish impiety,
In Christian poets may be found,
Where heathen gods with praise are crowned!
They make Jehovah to stand by,
Till Juno, Venus, Mercury,
With frowning Mars and thundering Jove,
Rule earth below and heaven above;
But I have learned to pray to none
Save only God in Christ alone.

* * *

Guide me, that I thy name may praise
And teach the sons of men thy ways."

In the gospel it says: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." Accordingly, Michael Wigglesworth begins his *Day of Doom* with a picture of a heedless and sensual world.

"Still was the night, serene and bright,
When all men sleeping lay;
Calm was the season and carnal reason
Thought so 'twould last for aye.
(But) at midnight forth breaks a light
Which turns the night to day,

And speedily a hideous cry
Doth all the world dismay.
(Men) rush from beds with giddy heads
And to their windows run,
Viewing this light which shines more bright
Than doth the noonday sun.

* * *

Before Christ's face the heavens give place,
And skies are rent asunder,
With mighty voice and hideous noise
More terrible than thunder."

After this the trumpet is sounded, at which the dead rise from their graves, the living are changed and all are brought before the great tribunal. The sheep are parted from the goats. The saints are placed upon their thrones to join with Christ in judging the world. All classes of wicked men are in turn condemned until at last according to the stern Calvinistic theology, now happily discarded, "reprobate infants" are reached, or as the poet says:

"Then to the bar they all drew near
Who died in infancy,
And never had or good or bad
Effected personally;
But from the womb unto the tomb
Were straightway carried,
Or at the least ere they transgressed
Who thus began to plead."

These poor babies plead that it is unjust to condemn them for Adam's sin, but are promptly told that Adam was their representative and that if he stood they would have been glad to profit by his obedience and so are justly punished for his fall. There is, however, a touch of grotesque pity in their sentence, for the Judge says to them:

" You sinners are and such a share
As sinners may expect;
Such you shall have, for I do save
None but mine own elect.

Yet to compare your sin with theirs
Who lived a longer time,
I do confess yours is much less,
Though every sin's a crime.

A crime it is: therefore in bliss
You may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow
The easiest room in hell."

Then all the wicked are sentenced and hurried away
to everlasting destruction. Christ says to them:

" Ye sinful wights and cursed sprites
That work iniquity,
Depart together from me forever
To endless misery.

Then might you hear them rend and tear
The air with their outcries;
The hideous noise of their sad voice
Ascendeth to the skies.

They hasten to the pit of woe,
Guarded by angels stout,
Who to fulfill Christ's holy will
Attend this wicked rout.

With iron bands they bind their hands
And cursed feet together
And cast them all, both great and small,
Into that lake forever.

Die fain they would, if die they could,
But death will not be had,
God's direful wrath their bodies hath
Forever immortal made.

They live to lie in misery
And bear eternal woe;
And live they must while God is just
That he may plague them so."

Mr. Tyler's concluding comment is this: "This great poem which with entire unconsciousness attributes to the Divine Being a character the most execrable and loathsome to be met with, perhaps, in any literature, Christian or pagan, had for a hundred years a popularity far exceeding any other work in prose or verse produced in America before the Revolution." It went through many editions in book form and was sold from house to house as a popular ballad; and its pages were assigned to little children to be learned by heart, along with the catechism. Cotton Mather predicted that it would be read in New England until the day of doom itself should arrive.

We turn with relief from Michael Wigglesworth to Roger Williams. Williams, born in Wales in 1606, and educated at Oxford, came to New England in 1631 and four years later was driven into exile for advocating full religious liberty in a community in which toleration was thought to be atheistic and impious. He made his way in the dead of winter to what is now Rhode Island and founded the city of Providence. He was more kindly treated by the Indians than by the whites and writes of his experience thus:

"If Nature's sons both wild and tame,
Humane and courteous be,

How ill becomes it sons of God
To want humanity:

God's providence is rich to his,
Let none distrustful be;
In wilderness in great distress
These ravens have fed me.

* * *

Lost many a time, I've had no guide,
No house but a hollow tree!
In stormy winter nights no fire,
No food, no company.

In God I've found a house, a bed,
A table, company:
No cup so bitter, but's made sweet,
When God shall sweetning be."

Puritanism lost power after the terrible witchcraft mania in 1692, and with the decline in religious enthusiasm poetry declined also, for an epoch of materialism is always unfavorable to literary creation. Of this period Whittier writes:

"Earth, which seemed to the fathers meant
But as a pilgrim's wayside tent,
Solid and steadfast seems to be
And Time has forgotten Eternity!"

Our next group of poets belongs to the period of the American Revolution and the source of their inspiration was not so much religion as patriotism.

Judge Trumbull, born in 1750, was the son of a Congregational minister. He was a delicate and very precocious child, able at two years of age to repeat all the verses in the New England Primer and when only

seven passing the examination for admission to Yale College. He subsequently became a tutor at Yale, then studied law in the office of John Adams, the future President, and was for many years Judge of the Supreme Court of Connecticut. He died, full of years and honors, political, legal and literary, in 1831. His literary masterpiece is a mock-heroic poem called *McFingal*. Books, like men, have pedigrees, and the pedigree of this book is curious. In 1605 Cervantes published his immortal *Don Quixote*, the object of which was to burlesque the extravagant romances of chivalry. In imitation of this great satire, Samuel Butler wrote his witty poem *Hudibras*, a mock epic in which he ridicules the efforts of a Puritan magistrate to cut down a Maypole and put a stop to festivities he thought sinful. Butler tells us of Sir Hudibras:

“A knight he was whose very sight would
Entitle him mirror of Knighthood.
We also grant he had much wit,
Though very shy in using it,
As being loath to wear it out,
And therefore bore it not about
Except on holidays or so
As men their best apparel do.
He could distinguish and divide
A hair 'twixt south and southwest side.
For rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth but out there flew a trope,
And if he happened to break off
I' the middle of his speech or cough,
He had hard words to tell you why
And show what rules he did it by;
Else when with greatest art he spoke
You'd think he talked like other folk.
'Tis known that he could speak in Greek

As naturally as pigs squeak
And Latin was no more difficile
Than for a blackbird 'tis to whistle.
For his religion it was fit
To match his learning and his wit,
'Twas Presbyterian, true blue,
For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints whom all men grant
To be the true church militant,
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun,
Decide all controversies by infallible artillery,
And prove their doctrines orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks."

Trumbull took this book as his model, and as Hudibras the Puritan Knight tried to cut down a Maypole, so McFingal, a stubborn Tory magistrate, tries to cut down a Liberty pole which in the early days of the American Revolution the Whig patriots had erected. The poem has all the flippancy and much of the wit of the original. It begins with this extraordinary invocation of the Muses:

"Ye nine great daughters of Jupiter,
Born of one mother at a litter,
Virgins who ne'er submit to wifedom
But sing and fiddle all your lifetime,
Assist."

The poem begins with daybreak and still using the language of Greek mythology the poet describes the sunrise as follows:

"Now from his hammock in the skies,
Phœbus jumped up and rubbed his eyes,
Clapp'd on his daylight round his ears,
Saddled his horse and fixed his spurs,

Night turned her back; and so in turn he
Mounted and set forth on his journey.

• • •

(When) warm with ministerial ire
Fierce sallied forth our loyal Squire,
And on his sturdy steps attends
His desperate clan of Tory friends,
When sudden met his wrathful eye
A pole ascending through the sky,
Which numerous throngs of Whiggish race
Were raising in the market place.

• • •

Our Squire, yet all undismayed
Call'd forth the Constable to aid,
'And bade him read in nearest station
The Riot Act and Proclamation.
He swift advancing to the ring
Began "Our Sovereign Lord the King."
When thousand clamorous tongues he hears,
And clubs and stones assail his ears,

• • •

'At once with resolution fatal
Both Whigs and Tories rushed to battle
And now perhaps with glory crowned
Our Squire had felled the pole to ground,
Had not some power, a Whig at heart,
Descended down and took their part;
(Whether 'twere Pallas, Mars or Iris
'Twere scarce worth while to make inquiries.) "

The Tories are vanquished in the fight and the Constable begs for and obtains mercy. He says:

"Good gentlemen and friends of kin,
For heaven's sake hear, if not for mine!

I here renounce the Pope, the Turks,
The King, the Devil, and all their works;

* * *

I'll never join in British rage,
Nor help Lord North nor General Gage;
Nor lift my gun in future fights,
Nor take away your charter rights.

* * *

Not so our Squire submits to rule,
But stood heroic as a mule,
You'll find it all in vain, quoth he,
To play your rebel tricks on me.
The will gains strength from treatment horrid,
As hides grow harder when they're curried;

* * *

And can you think my faith will alter
By tarring, whipping, or the halter?
I'll stand the worst; for recompense
I trust King George and Providence.

* * *

Few moments with deliberation
They held a solemn consultation,
When soon in judgment all agree,
And clerk proclaims the dread decree:
That Squire McFingal having grown
The vilest Tory in the town,
And now in full examination
Convicted by his own confession,
Finding no tokens of repentance,
This court proceeds to render sentence:
That first the Mob a slipknot single
Tie round the neck of said McFingal,
And in due form do tar him next
And feather as the law directs.

* * *

Forthwith the crowd proceed to deck
 With halter'd noose McFingal's neck,

* * *

Then lifting high the ponderous jar
 Pour'd o'er his head the smoking tar.
 With less profusion once was spread
 Oil on the Jewish monarch's head,
 That down his beard and vestments ran
 And cover'd all his outward man.

* * *

So from the high-raised urn the torrents
 Spread from his side their various currents:
 His flowing wig, as next the brim,
 First met and drank the sable stream;
 Adorn his visage stern and grave
 Roll'd and adhered the viscid wave;

* * *

From nose and chin's remotest end
 The tarry icicles descend;
 With arms depending as he stood,
 Each cuff capacious holds the flood;
 Till all o'erspread with colors gay
 He glittered to the western ray.

* * *

And now the feather-bag display'd
 Is waved in triumph o'er his head,
 And clouds him o'er with feathers missive,
 And down, upon the tar, adhesive.

* * *

Not Milton's six wing'd angel gathers
 Such superfluity of feathers.

* * *

Then on the fatal cart in state
 They raised our grand Duumvirate.
 In front the martial music comes
 Of horns and fiddles, fifes and drums,

* * *

And at fit periods every throat
Combined in universal shout;
And hail'd great Liberty in chorus,
Or bawl'd "confusion to the Tories."
Thus having borne them round the town,
Last at the pole they sat them down,
And to the tavern take their way
To end in mirth the festal day."

It is not surprising to learn that this lively satire went rapidly through thirty editions, that its influence on public opinion was very great, or that its brilliant young author was subsequently honored and rewarded with a judgeship. Trumbull is altogether a notable man and his other works are well worth examination, particularly a poem on "The Progress of Dulness," in which he denounces exclusive attention to Latin and Greek and Mathematics, and is the pioneer advocate of the extended study of English literature.

One of Trumbull's intimate friends at College was Timothy Dwight, who afterward became President Dwight of Yale and a man so famous as a preacher that his admirers said that he was "second only to Saint Paul."

Trumbull had aspired only to imitate Butler and write a mock heroic poem. Dwight dared to make Milton his model and to attempt to write a genuine epic. It would have been well if he had had not only Milton's ambition but also Milton's prudence, for to write a truly great epic poem is the most difficult of literary achievements and only at long intervals through the ages does a poet succeed in this supreme task. Homer, Virgil, Dante and Milton are the short list of those who have met both popular and critical approval in this endeavor,

Milton deliberated many years before making his final choice of a theme and his commonplace book, still preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, gives a list of sixty-one Biblical and thirty-eight secular subjects which he had considered. From childhood it had been his purpose to write something that "the world would not willingly let die," but he declared that such a poem was "not to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge; and to this (prayer) must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs."

Accordingly Milton waited till he was fifty years old till he had had large experience of life, till he had read and reread the masterpieces of Hebrew, Greek and Latin literature, as well as the best works in English and other modern tongues, and until much practice had given him perfect command of all the resources of the vocabulary, all the figures of rhetoric and all the wonderful and complex harmonies of versification.

But youth is audacious and Timothy Dwight, in the ardor of his patriotism, aspired to write for his country a poem that should rival *Paradise Lost*. We see the spirit that urged him on in his poem *Columbia*, which he wrote at West Point, while he was serving as a chaplain in the patriot army. He writes:

"As down a lone valley, with cedars o'erspread,
From war's dread confusion, I pensively strayed,—
The gloom from the face of fair heaven retired;
The winds ceased to murmur, the thunders expired;
Perfumes as of Eden, flowed sweetly along,
And a voice as of angels, enchantingly sung:

'Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world and the child of the skies.'"

Dwight chose for his subject the Conquest of Canaan. It will be remembered by the reader of *Paradise Lost* that Adam, after his fall, became penitent and God, to comfort him in his desolation and sorrow, revealed to him the coming of Christ and the glories of his Kingdom.

Dwight adopts the same poetic machinery and injects into his account of the Conquest of Canaan a history of America, as it was revealed to Joshua by an angel. The poem was republished in England and was honored with a long review from the pen of William Cowper, the most famous poet then living. Cowper says among much else:

"In his fictions he discovers much warmth of conception, and his numbers are very harmonious. . . . A strain of fine enthusiasm runs through the whole book; and we will venture to affirm that no man who has a soul impressible by a bright display of the grandest subjects that revelation furnishes, will read it without emotion. The composition, however, is not without a fault; and as we have candidly praised, we will censure with fidelity. We found our attention to the wars of Joshua not pleasantly interrupted by a tribute paid to the memory of a Mr. Wooster, slain on Ridgefield Hills in America; of a Mr. Warren, who fell in battle at Charlestown, and of a Mr. Mercer, who shared a similar fate at Princeton. He would plead, perhaps, his patriotism for his apology; but it is best to admit nothing that needs one."

Such is the forbearing judgment and gentle condemnation of a kindly brother poet upon this ambitious attempt.

Timothy Dwight is still remembered as a man of marvelous power as a preacher and as one of the greatest college presidents. He is remembered, too, as a poet, by his song in praise of Columbia and still more by his hymn,

" I love thy Kingdom, Lord,"

which is engraved on a tablet of brass and hangs upon the college walls at Yale, and has been welcomed into the hymn books of almost every denomination of the Christian church; but alas! his labored epic is forgotten, or is but glanced at for a moment as a premature attempt to accomplish a task which needs the highest powers and the most favorable conditions.

A most deliberate, a wiser and a far more successful attempt to write an epic was made by a third member of this group of friends, Joel Barlow. Barlow is best known nowadays by a serio-comic poem on Hasty Pudding, under which unpromising title he has written a delightful idyl of farm life a century ago and given a pleasing picture of his own boyhood. He says:

" I sing the sweet I know, the charms I feel,
My morning incense and my evening meal,
The sweets of Hasty Pudding. Come, dear bowl,
Glide o'er my palate and inspire my soul.

* * *

There are who strive to stamp with disrepute
The luscious food because it feeds the brute.
With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,
Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast;
(Nor) can the genius of the noisy swine,
Though nursed on pudding, claim a kin to mine.

My father loved thee through his length of days!
For thee his fields were shaded o'er with maize;
From thee what health, what vigor, he possess'd,
Ten sturdy freemen from his loins attest;
Thy constellation ruled my natal morn,
And all my bones were made of Indian corn.

Slow springs the blade while check'd by chilling rains
Ere yet the sun the seat of Cancer gains;
But when his fiercest fires emblaze the land,
Then start the juices, then the roots expand;
Then, like a column of Corinthian mould,
The stalk struts upward and the leaves unfold;
The busy branches all the ridges fill,
Entwine their arms and kiss from hill to hill."

Barlow, like the typical American farmer boy, had an ambition for scholarship and politics. He went to Yale, where Dwight was his tutor and Noah Webster his classmate, and began his public career as a poet by delivering in 1778 instead of a Commencement oration a poem on the Prospect of Peace. Peace, however, did not come immediately, and Barlow soon after graduation became a chaplain in the army, in which position he won the favor of both officers and soldiers, receiving marked courtesies from Washington himself. On the conclusion of peace, he studied law and later went to Europe as the agent of a land company. In England he joined a Constitutional Society whose object was to make Great Britain a republic. By this organization he was sent to France to deliver an address to the French Convention, then the supreme governing body. That famous assembly conferred on him the honor of French citizenship, a distinction which it had at that time bestowed upon only two other Americans, Washington and Hamilton, and moreover,

appointed him a member of a deputation to establish republican government in the territory of Savoy.

Barlow made a large fortune by speculation and was living in great splendor in Paris when he was appointed United States minister to France, and in this capacity went to meet Napoleon in Russia and died there of fatigue and exposure in December, 1812.

But all this clerical, commercial, political and diplomatic activity was but a sort of scaffold. Throughout life, Barlow's supreme ambition was to write a great patriotic poem. He began work upon it in his early days as an army chaplain and after twenty-five years of labor, published, in 1807, what he fondly hoped would be an immortal epic, *The Columbiad*.

Castelar, the great Spanish orator, said of the discoverer of the western hemisphere: "Columbus discovered America by faith: if the continent had not existed God would have made it rise from the waters to answer to such faith as his. The life of Columbus is a shameful illustration of the ingratitude of kings and statesmen, for the greatest of all navigators was disgraced and superseded as governor of the territory he had discovered, and actually sent back to Spain in fetters of iron." The life of Columbus was one of high endeavor and world-enriching achievement, all basely rewarded by poverty, imprisonment, pain and shame. Certainly, the career of this man of genius, of faith and of sorrow is one of the most fitting of all themes for an epic or dramatic poem.

The poem opens with a description of the prison of Columbus at Valladolid. Columbus, old and sick, lifts his clanking chains and in the darkness tells to his dungeon walls the story of his wrongs and his despair. Suddenly, as he speaks, a splendor fills the dark room, and

"Robed in the radiance, moved a form serene,
Of human structure, but of heavenly mien;
Near to the prisoner's couch he takes his stand,
And waves in sign of peace his holy hand.
Tall rose his stature; youth's endearing grace
Adorned his limbs and brighten'd in his face;
Loose o'er his locks the star of evening hung,
And sounds melodious moved his cheerful tongue."

This splendid visitor is Hesper, the guardian genius of the twin-continents which Columbus had made known to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To Columbus in his despair, Hesper brings as consolation a vision of the future glories and greatness of the new world, and of the inestimable blessings it is to confer upon the whole human race. He reveals to him the conquest of Mexico and Peru, the progress of the French and English settlements, the defeat of the French, the war of the Revolution and the adoption of the Federal Constitution. So far Barlow, under the guise of prediction, had been narrating history; but the necessities of his epic compelled him actually to lift the veil of futurity, and he does so with considerable success.

The railway was yet undreamed of in Barlow's day, but there was already much talk about opening the west to commerce by means of canals. Barlow's prophetic foresight took a still wider range and he predicted that canals would be dug both at Suez and Panama. He says:

"From the red banks of blest Arabia's tide,
Through the dread isthmus waves unwonted glide."

The Suez canal was opened in 1869, sixty-two years after the publication of Barlow's prophecy, and it now looks as though we were near the time when his prediction will be fulfilled that:

"Where Darien hills o'erlook the gulfy tide,
By human art the ridgy banks divide;
Ascending sails the opening pass pursue,
And waft the sparkling treasures of Peru."

All genuine poetry is inspired by the love of truth and right.

Every poet according to the measure of his inspiration inculcates what is true, beautiful and good, and condemns what is false and ugly and evil. Accordingly, we should expect to find in the Columbiad a vigorous denunciation of African slavery. The appeal for justice to the negro introduces another Titanic figure into the poem, Atlas, the guardian of Africa, of whom it is said:

"High o'er his coast he rears his frowning form,
O'erlooks and calms his sky-borne fields of storm,
Flings off the clouds that round his shoulders hung,
And breaks from clogs of ice his trembling tongue."

After such a description of the speaker, consistency requires a great utterance. It is as follows:

"Great Hesper, say what sordid ceaseless hate
Impels thee thus to mar my elder state

* * *

(Why do) thy sons, a strange ungenerous race,
Enslave my tribes and each fair world disgrace.

* * *

Enslave my tribes! what have mankind in ban,
Then read, expound, enforce the rights of man?

If still they dare debase
And hold enthral'd the millions of my race,—
A vengeance (soon) shall shake the world's deep frame
That heaven abhors and hell might shrink to name.

Fire waits the fissure that my wave shall find
To force the foldings of the rocky rind,
Crash your curst continent and wheel on high
The vast avulsion vaulting thro' the sky,
Two oceans dashed in one shall climb and roar
And seek in vain the exterminated shore." *

Samuel Johnson voices the general sentiment of the poets when he says that:

"Reason frowns on war's unequal game
Where wasted nations raise a single name."

This common aversion of the poets to the injustice and cruelty of war was deepened in Barlow's case by his personal experiences as a soldier in the American Revolution and still more by the awful sufferings and unparalleled loss of life of Napoleon's army in Russia. On June 25, 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia with an army of 500,000 men. On October 19, of the same year, he commenced his retreat from the burning city of Moscow. But he had delayed too long and the Russian winter had already begun. Day after day, his hungry, tattered soldiers staggered through the blinding snow, and night after night they left a ring of frozen corpses beside their extinguished camp fires. Barlow was a witness to some of the horrors of this retreat, and as he heard the hoarse ravens croak above the dead, he wrote an impassioned poem telling them that they need not follow Napoleon to Russia, for that he would provide them in any part of Europe.

"You fear he left behind no wars to feed
His feathered cannibals and nurse the breed.
Fear not, my screamers, call your greedy train,
Sweep over Europe, hurry back to Spain.

* * *

* Slightly altered in the abridgment.

Fear nothing! hatch (in haste) your ravenous brood,
Teach them to cry to Bonaparte for food.

* * *

While on his slaughtered troops your tribes are fed,
You cleanse his camp and carry off his dead,
Imperial scavengers; but now, you know,
Your work is vain amid these hills of snow,
His tentless troops are marbled through with frost,
And changed to crystal when the breath is lost.

* * *

They cannot taint the air, the world infest,
Nor can you tear one fibre from their breast.
No! from their visual sockets as they lie
With beak and claws you cannot pluck an eye —
The frozen orb preserving still its form,
Defies your talons as it braves the storm,
But stands and stares to God as if to know
In what cursed hands he leaves his world below.

* * *

Go back and winter in the wilds of Spain;
Feast there awhile and in the next campaign
Rejoin your master, for you'll find him then,
With his new millions of the race of men,
Cloth'd in his thunders, all his flags unfurl'd,
Raging and storming o'er a prostrate world!
War after war, his hungry soul requires;
State after state shall sink beneath his fires.
Yet other Spains in victim smoke shall rise,
And other Moscows suffocate the skies,
Each land lie reeking with its people slain,
And not a stream run bloodless to the main,
Till men resume their souls and dare to shed
Earth's total vengeance on the monster's head!"

Barlow dictated this tremendous imprecation and appeal from a sick bed. They were in fact his dying words and he had hardly penned them before he him-

self was added to the innumerable company of Napoleon's victims. He died December 22d, 1812, in a humble hostelry in the little village of Zarnawicka, Poland.

Barlow did not succeed in writing a great epic, but he wrote a good deal of vigorous didactic verse. Professor Tyler, a competent and cautious judge, says of *The Columbiad*: "This huge political and philosophical essay in verse may be accepted by us as an involuntary expression, for that period, of the American national consciousness and even of the American national character, as sincere and unflinching as were, in their different ways, the renowned state paper of Jefferson, the constitution of 1789, and Washington's farewell address."

Barlow's literary honors are not small; but far above them is his personal worth, and he deserves to be loved not only as a pure and ardent American patriot, but as one who loved and strove to help his fellow men of every nationality and race!



THE ART OF POETRY

THE ART OF POETRY

The subject of this lecture is the art of poetry. On such a complex and difficult theme, there is great danger of running into pedantry and tedious detail, or on the other hand of avoiding these evils by an uninstructional superficiality. I would rather be helpful than entertaining, and must ask your indulgence if I present to you here only a few plain and somewhat elementary facts in regard to the technique of poetry.

When Edgar Allan Poe gave a course of lectures on the art of poetry, James Russell Lowell said of them:

“He talks like a book of iamb and pentameters

In a way to make people of common sense damn metres,”

Yet in spite of Lowell's ungracious disparagement of such discussions, it remains true that knowledge of the technique of poetry adds to a reader's enjoyment of it in the same way that a knowledge of the technique of music adds immeasurably to the pleasure of listening to a symphony or sonata.

We call painting, sculpture, architecture, music and poetry fine arts. Architecture, sculpture and painting have an advantage over poetry in that they appeal directly to the eye, which is the noblest of our senses, or to use John Bunyan's phrase, we may say that knowledge that enters at eye-gate is better than that which enters at ear-gate. A picture impresses a fact upon us with a power beyond that of the clearest and strongest words. But the disadvantage of the picture as compared with the poem is that the picture is confined

to a single aspect of the subject, and though a succession of pictures may represent a succession of events, still they cannot do so with anything like the fullness of detail of a good narrative. No succession of pictures could ever be a substitute for the *Iliad* or *Paradise Lost*.

Music has an advantage over poetry in that the immediate impression produced by it is usually much stronger. No poem of war stirs the blood like the sound of a trumpet, no mirthful song makes the nerves tingle like the tones of a violin.

Yet music alone is vague and inarticulate. It speaks strongly to the emotions but very feebly to the intellect. We receive the greatest enjoyment and the largest benefit when perfect music is joined to noble words. The choral song lifts us to heights of rapture and devotion beyond the power of spoken words.

Yet all things considered, poetry is the chief of the fine arts. It is the most comprehensive, the most enduring and the most universal. No painting contains much or lasts long, or can be seen by many people. Its colors fade, its canvas cracks and crumbles, and even during its short life of two or three centuries, it is confined to one place at a time. The statue or the building last a little longer, but they too are made of perishable materials and they are even more narrowly than the picture confined to one spot. But the poem has a virtual eternity and universality.

Poetry is the most permanent of the fine arts. While all the painting and all the music of antiquity has perished, while the statues are broken fragments and the temples are crumbling ruins, the best poetry of the ancient world is perennially young. The psalms, the parables and the beatitudes, losing little by

translation, are becoming the inspiration and delight of all nations, and it is hardly a figure of speech to say that they will eventually pass from earth to heaven and that there one of the enjoyments of the blessed will be to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

Poetry is the earliest form of literature. Before the art of writing was invented and during the long ages when all writings were carved upon the rock or impressed upon tablets of clay, poetry was the great medium of preserving and transmitting the history and wisdom of the past generations. It is very much easier to remember verse than prose, as is evident from the fact that we all remember far more of it. People seldom remember the phraseology of ordinary newspaper writing, but retain only the general idea. Indeed few people, when they have read a novel, can quote accurately a single sentence from it. But we all instinctively and without effort remember a great deal of the poetry we read and can easily recall the words of hymns and songs that we never attempted to commit to memory.

The purpose which poetry once universally served in recording fact and experience is suggested by the part which it still plays in preserving popular wisdom and philosophy. There are people whose meteorological science is nearly all summed up in the couplet,

“Red in the morning, the shepherd’s warning,
Red at night, the shepherd’s delight.”

There are people who are never quite sure of the number of days in any month until they have repeated:

“Thirty days hath September,
April, June and November;
All the rest have thirty-one,

Excepting February alone:
Which hath but twenty-eight in fine
Till Leap Year gives it twenty-nine."

Even in this progressive epoch when invention has conquered darkness and made night cheerful, there is wisdom in the old adage,

"Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise,"

and there would be need of fewer physicians if everybody acted upon the rude wisdom of the doggerel verse,

"Joy and temperance and repose
Slam the door on the doctor's nose."

Cooks and kitchen maids who find it hard to remember tables of weights and measures seldom forget the convenient rhyming equivalent expressed in the phrase,

"A pint is a pound the world around."

Few sermons contain so much portable and practical wisdom as the old quatrain which Sir Matthew Hale, the Puritan judge, used to quote:

"A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content,
And health for the toils of the morrow,
But a Sabbath profaned, whate'er may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow."

I have assumed so far that everybody knows what poetry is, yet it may be well to attempt to define it. The cautious dictionary tells us that poetry is metrical composition, a union of metre and sense.

If, as in the following lines, there is metre without sense, the result is not poetry.

"Where is Cupid's crimson motion?
Billowy ecstasy of woe?
Bear me straight, meandering ocean,
Where the stagnant torrents flow."

That is a mere nonsense verse, a burlesque upon those who are so in love with form and sound that they sacrifice sense to it, the kind of versifiers of whom Pope wrote:

"In the bright Muse though thousand charms conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire."

Nor do words and ideas essentially commonplace and prosaic become poetry by the use of regular accents and appropriate rhymes. In what was meant for a hymn, I once read a stanza which ran thus:

"We thank thee for our industries,
Our factories and mines,
For labor and for capital,
For business in all lines."

The sentiment is pious, yet the stanza is utterly prosaic.

How different the definite enumeration of factories and mines and labor and capital from the bold and beautiful language of the Bible in which a fertile country filled with cattle feeding on the grass and bees ranging among the flowers, is spoken of as "a land flowing with milk and honey." In Sir Philip Sidney's impassioned *Defense of Poetry*, one of the earliest English treatises upon the subject, the brilliant scholar and soldier, the friend and patron of Spenser and Shakespeare, uses the following stately and eloquent language:

"It is not riming and versing that maketh a poet,

no more than a long gowne maketh an advocate, who though he pleaded in armor should be an advocate and no souldier. But it is that fayning notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing to know a poet by."

Shakespeare tells us that:

"As imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

The language of science is abstract, that of poetry is concrete and picturesque. The man of science speaks of height and magnitude and velocity; the poet, of cloud-capped towers, of broad oceans and of swiftly flying birds. This difference suggests the statement of Milton, who declares that poetry is simple, sensuous and passionate.

Gray, the author of the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, said that the language of poetry must be "pure, perspicuous and musical."

But these definitions are suggestive rather than complete. Imagination, passion and music are not the whole of poetry. Great poetry must have solidity and substance of thought. Aristotle declared that poetry was a higher form of truth than history, and Matthew Arnold's famous definition is: "Poetry is a criticism of life." Coleridge said: "Good sense is the body, imagination the soul and fancy the drapery of poetry." Leigh Hunt, in a still more elaborate and careful definition, says: "Poetry is the utterance of a passion for truth, beauty and power, illustrating and embodying its conceptions by imagination and fancy,

and modulating its language on the principle of variety in uniformity."

Passing from these definitions of poetry, let us consider its special themes. Poetry ignores the trivial and is concerned with the high and permanent hopes and fears and duties and enjoyments of the soul. Wordsworth utters this benediction upon the poets:

" Blessings be with them and eternal praise
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,
The poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays."

Still more beautiful and comprehensive is Longfellow's description of the poet. He says:

" All the many sounds of Nature
Borrowed sweetness from his singing;
All the hearts of men were softened
By the pathos of his music;
For he sang of peace and freedom,
Sang of beauty, love and longing;
Sang of death and life undying
In the Islands of the Blessed,
In the kingdom of Ponemah,
In the land of the Hereafter."

An ancient proverb says that "the poet is born, not made;" yet although the poetic faculty is a divine inspiration, it can be cultivated and increased, and the greatest genius needs also to be an artist. In Ben Johnson's famous eulogy on Shakespeare, after a high tribute to Shakespeare's natural endowments, Jonson declares:

" Yet must I not give Nature all; thy art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.

• • •

He who casts to write a living line must
sweat,
And strike the second heat
Upon the Muse's anvil, . . .
Or for the laurel he may gain a scorn,
For a good poet's made as well as born."

In antiquity, there were indeed Greek poets who professed to utter verses on any given theme without previous preparation, and in our day races with a lively imagination, such as the Arabians, Italians, and negroes, still display the talent of spontaneous versifying, and it is occasionally found even among men of the less emotional and imaginative nations. Theodore Hook, an English dramatic poet who lived in the early part of the last century, was a famous improvisor. It is related that on one occasion he and an actor named Terry, as they were going home from the theatre, passed a large and brilliantly lighted house from which the lively sound of dance music was coming. It was evident that some family of wealth and distinction was giving a ball, and Hook was unable to resist the attraction. He said to Terry, "We are in evening dress, let's go in, they'll think we've been invited, and if not, no matter." So in they went, were politely received, made themselves very agreeable, danced and sang and ate and drank and told stories till all the company were wondering who they could be, when suddenly Hook sat down to the piano and to his own accompaniment sang this farewell and explanatory stanza:

"I'm very well pleased with your fare,
Your cellar's as good as your cook;
My friend's Mr. Terry, the player,
And I'm Mr. Theodore Hook."

Three quarters of a century ago, just before the rise of Longfellow to public favor, the gay and graceful N. P. Willis was the most popular and admired American poet. His pious father had called him Nathaniel, but the solemn Scripture name was too heavy for the brilliant trifler to bear, and he was familiarly designated as Nat. Willis. He was a great ladies' man, and on one occasion at a dinner party was paying his very best compliments to a handsome young woman who was receiving them with evident enjoyment, when her aunt and chaperon noticed the actions of the pair and wrote to her niece a note of censure and rebuke in the words, "Don't flirt so outrageously with Nat Willis." Willis read the note and noticing that the aunt was herself enjoying the society of a certain Mr. Campbell, he begged the young lady to allow him to write an answer in her name, which he did in these words:

"Dear Aunt, don't attempt my young feelings to trammel,
Nor strain at a Nat, whilst you swallow a Campbell."

Brilliant and amusing trifles have sometimes been produced on the spur of the moment, and many very great poems have been written with marvelous rapidity. Tam O'Shanter, the very masterpiece of the genius of Robert Burns, was written in a single day. Longfellow wrote the most touching and beautiful of his ballads, The Wreck of the Hesperus, in the hours between midnight and three in the morning. He says: "It hardly cost me an effort. It did not come into my mind by lines, but by stanzas." The Vision of Sir Launfal, the most imaginative and at the same time the most profound and noble of Lowell's poems, was written in four days.

The larger part of the matchless modern pastoral, the *Hermann and Dorothea* of Goethe, was written in a week. But in all these cases there had been long periods of unconscious accumulation of material and unconscious preparation of mind and heart. As in a blast furnace the ores are slowly melted and fused and then at last the molten metal pours forth in sudden flow, so ideas ferment in the mind and feelings glow in the heart, until by and by they manifest themselves with a force and suddenness that seem almost supernatural.

But efforts of this kind can never be long sustained. All literary biography shows that the highest efforts of genius are intermittent and that any great increase in the quantity of a man's writing is gained at the expense of its quality. Oliver Goldsmith considered ten lines of good poetry a good day's work, and certainly few poets who have polished their verses with the same scrupulous care as the author of the *Deserted Village*, have much exceeded this rate of speed. Pope, indeed, tells us that in translating Homer's *Iliad* he often wrote fifty lines a day, but when we observe the dates at which he began and ended his great task, we find that averaging his less productive and non-productive days with his most successful ones, his average rate of composition did not much exceed the ten lines Goldsmith declared sufficient. Milton, in the full maturity of his knowledge and skill, spent seven years in writing *Paradise Lost*, a poem of less than 12,000 lines, so that, if we exclude Sundays and holidays from consideration and allow only 300 days to a year, his average was less than six lines a day.

These well substantiated biographical facts show

how carefully poets generally subject their first inspiration to the revision of their later critical judgment. The poet chooses his words and arranges them for the best effect with as much care as the painter draws his outlines, and colors and shades his pictures. Byron was one of the gifted and spontaneous poets. His mind was stored with knowledge, his passions were strong and his imagination was fertile; yet his letters and the manuscripts of his poetry show how carefully he studied composition as an art. Scarcely any other man has revealed himself so fully and frankly to the world, and it is curious and amusing to read the confession of this divine genius that on a pinch, he did not disdain, like the veriest tyro and poetaster, to turn over a dictionary of rhymes to enable him the more easily to complete a troublesome stanza. When he had just published *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* and was at the zenith of his poetic fame, with saucy and amusing self-deprecation he wrote:

“ I am but a nameless sort of person,
A broken dandy lately on my travels,
And so I take to hook my rambling verse on
The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels;
And if I can't find that I take a worse one,
Not caring as I should for critics' cavils;
I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
But verse is more in fashion, so here goes.”

All poetry, from the highest to the lowest is an art as well as an inspiration. Let us then briefly consider some of the elements and forms of this art.

Hebrew poetry depended very largely upon what is called parallelism, the repetition of the same thought in consecutive sentences of similar length and structure. This style of poetry runs through the Bible

from Genesis to Revelation. For instance in Genesis we read,

“ And Lamech said unto his wives:
Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech;
For I have slain a man to my wounding
And a young man to my hurt.
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.”

But the most perfect examples of parallelism in thought and form in Hebrew poetry are in the Psalms. I will read a few illustrative verses from the second psalm:

“ Why do the heathen rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing?
The Kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the Lord
And against his anointed, saying
Let us break their bands asunder
And cast away their cords from us.
He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh,
The Lord shall have them in derision.”

Parallelism is found occasionally in almost all the English poets, and Longfellow made it the especial characteristic of *Hiawatha* which opens thus:

“ Should you ask me whence these stories,
Whence these legends and traditions,
With the odors of the forest,
With the dew and damp of meadows,
With the curling smoke of wigwams,
With the rushing of great rivers,
With their frequent repetitions,

And their wild reverberations
As of thunder in the mountains,
I repeat them as I heard them
From the lips of Nawahdaha
The musician, the sweet singer."

Edgar Allen Poe also made much use of parallelism and repetition in producing his strange and haunting melodies. The first stanza of *Ulalune* is as follows:

"The skies they were ashen and sober,
The leaves they were crisped and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

The classic poetry of the Greeks does not depend upon parallelism, nor does it make much use of rhyme. Rhymes are occasionally found, but so rarely that they seem accidental. The poetry of the Greeks was based on musical time, or as it is commonly called, quantity. The hexameter is the most famous of Greek measures. The six feet consist of one dactyl and five spondees, of two dactyls and four spondees, of three dactyls and three spondees, of four dactyls and two spondees, or of five dactyls and one spondee. A dactyl contains three syllables and a spondee only two, so that a line of one dactyl and five spondees contains only thirteen syllables, whereas a line of five dactyls and one spondee contains seventeen syllables. Yet these lines are perfect metrical equivalents.

English poetry is not based primarily upon quantity, but upon accent; yet the Greek principle may

often be recognized in some degree in English verse. In Browning's beautiful poem, *The Boy and the Angel*, most of the lines contain seven or eight syllables, but occasionally there are lines of six syllables, and these short lines require just as much time for their proper pronunciation as the longer ones. The poem begins:

Morning, evening, noon and night,
 "Praise God!" sang Theocrite.
 There to his poor trade he turned,
 Whereby the daily meal was earned.
 Hard he labored, long and well;
 O'er his work the boy's curls fell.
 But ever at each period,
 He stopped and sang, "Praise God."

It is obvious from the structure of the verse that the poet intended that the two emphatic syllables "Praise God" should take as much time as four ordinary syllables.

Let me give an example of the same principle, differently applied, from Tennyson. The Poem of *The Princess* is an elaborate and stately argument for woman's dignity and full equality with man. The extract that I shall read is part of a lecture by the Lady Psyche. Says the poet:

"She took
 A bird's-eye view of all the ungracious past;
 Glanced at the legendary Amazon
 As emblematic of a nobler age;

* * *

Ran down the Persian, Grecian, Roman lines
 Of empire, and the woman's state in each,
 How far from just; till warming with her theme,

She fulminated out her scorn of law salique
And little-footed China, touched on Mahomet
With much contempt, and came to chivalry."

The poem consists of lines of ten syllables each, yet the line "And little-footed China, touched on Mahomet" contains twelve syllables and in order that these twelve may be spoken in the same length of time as the usual ten, they must be uttered very rapidly. The poet's purpose is to make this rapidity of utterance a means of slurring over the name of Mohamet, and thus emphasizing the lady's aversion and contempt for the polygamous prophet.

English poetry depends upon rhythm and rhyme, upon measured movement and recurring sound. Like every other art of man, the art of poetry is taught by Nature and based on certain elemental facts. There is a regularity in the inspiration and expiration of the breath and in the ebb and flow of the blood. We see the same rhythm on a grander scale in the tides of the ocean, in the succession of day and night, in the alternation of summer and winter. As Emerson says:

"Come lift thine eyes to lofty rhymes,
Of things with things, of times with times,
Primal chimes of sun and shade,
Of sound and echo, man and maid,
The land reflected in the flood,
Body with shadow still pursued.
For Nature beats in perfect tune,
And rounds with rhyme her every rune,
Whether she work on land or sea,
Or hide underground her alchemy.
Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,

But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhymes the oar forsake."

It seems to us obvious that the proper place for a rhyme is at the end of the verse; but there are two ways of looking at every question, and our earliest English ancestors did not think as we do, but preferred to place their rhymes at the beginning of verses and feet, and omit them at the end. In other words the earliest English poetry was what we call alliterative. Each line of poetry contained three or sometimes four accented syllables beginning with the same or a very similar letter. *Beowulf*, the earliest English poem, belonging in its original form to the fourth or fifth century, describes a ship as "Floating thing, foam-bowed and fowl-like." It speaks of the "nipping night and northern wind." But we can get the effect of early English poetry better by taking an example from the fourteenth century in which the words will be more readily understood. Langland opens his vision of *Piers the Plowman* with the words:

"I was a-weary forwandered and went to rest
Under a broad bank by a burnside;
There as I lay and leaned and looked on the waters
I slumbered in a sleeping, it sounded so merry."

Rhyme came in with the Norman Conquest of England in the eleventh century, but only slowly supplanted the old alliterative verse. Many poets resisted the new fashion of rhyming and continued to write alliterative poems in the same patriotic spirit as they maintained other national customs. Other poets tried to combine the new Norman rhymes with the old Anglo-Saxon alliteration and produced stanzas of this sort:

"In summer when the shaws are sheen
And leaves are large and long,
It is full merry in fair forest
To hear the fowles song."

Alliteration is still a very valuable adjunct to rhyme in English poetry, and it is not beyond the truth to say that every good English poem owes part of its melody to this principle. A few examples will make this plain. Coleridge in the *Ancient Mariner* says:

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free,
We were the first, that ever burst
Into that silent sea."

Byron writes in *Childe Harold*:

"Pride bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate;
See how the mighty shrink into a song;
Can volume, pillar, pile preserve thee great,
Or must thou trust tradition's simple tongue,
When flattery sleeps with thee and history does thee
wrong?"

Tennyson in *The Princess* speaks of the Woman's College:

"With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans
And sweet girl graduates with their golden hair."

And Browning, in whose works consummate examples of every rhetorical excellence may be found in profusion, gives us this choice specimen of alliterative skill:

"All the breath and the bloom of the year in the bag of
one bee,
All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the heart of one
gem,

In the core of one pearl all the shade and shine of the sea."

And to give but one more example, Kipling, voicing the weariness and lassitude of an Englishman amid the debilitating splendors of tropical India and his longing for the sterner landscape and climate of the north, says:

"The rose has lost its fragrance
And the koil's note is strange,
I am sick of endless sunshine
And the blossom-burdened bough,
Give me back the leafless woodlands
Where the winds of springtime range.
Give me back one day in England
For it's spring in England now."

Rhymes are single or double, or as they are figuratively called masculine or feminine; for the single or masculine rhyme gives a stronger, and the double or feminine rhyme a softer and more graceful, effect. The spirit of Sir Walter Scott's poetry is expressed in the stanza:

"Sound, sound the trumpet, fill the fife,
To all the sensual world proclaim
One crowded hour of glorious life
Is worth an age without a name."

Scott's masculine rhymes are repeated at short intervals and fall on the ear like repeated strokes of sword or hammer. Of the Knights of Branksome, Scott says:

"They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day nor yet by night:
They lay down to rest
With corslet laced,

Pillowed on buckler cold and hard;
They carved at the meal
With gloves of steel.
And they drank the red wine through the helmet
barred."

And when Marmion sees the splendid Scottish army
in battle array, he does not wonder that the Scotch
King refuses offers of peace, but says:

"For by Saint George, were that host mine
Not power infernal or divine
Should once to peace my heart incline,
Till I had dimmed their armor's shine
In battle's glorious fray."

In contrast with this ringing verse in masculine
rhymes we find that tender and gentle thoughts are ex-
pressed in softer forms of verse. So the poet sings in
feminine rhymes,

"Beyond the sowing and the reaping
I shall be soon,
Beyond the smiling and the weeping
I shall be soon."

Triple rhymes are also often used in pathetic pas-
sages as in Hood's *Bridge of Sighs*, in which he says
of the poor girl suicide:

"One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly.
Young and so fair!

Loop up her tresses
 Escaped from the comb,—
 Her fair auburn tresses,—
 Whilst wonderment guesses
 Where was her home?

Alas! for the rarity
 Of Christian charity
 Under the sun!
 O, it was pitiful!
 Near a whole city-ful
 Home she had none."

But triple rhymes also readily lend themselves to comic or satiric effects. Byron was fond of using triple rhyme as a lash to the whip of his scorn. Of all forms of ignorance he most despised that which disguises itself in a pedantic affectation of knowledge, and so we find such couplets as this:

"He loved his child and would have felt the loss of her,
 But knew the cause no more than a philosopher."

Lowell also frequently uses triple rhymes in satire. In that caricature of Bryant's poetry which the author of *Thanatopsis* never forgave, Lowell says:

"There is Bryant as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
 As a smooth, silent iceberg that never is ignifed,—
 Unqualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose he has 'em,
 But he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm."

Some dainty and artistic versifiers delight to place their rhymes at long intervals and thus secure a delicate, elusive, and subtle grace that is felt but often not traced to its source.

The mechanical use of rhyme is always attended with

the danger of warping the sense. Samuel Butler said in *Hudibras* that

“Rhymes the rudders are of verses
By which like ships they steer their courses,”

and as for his own doggerel lines, he frankly admitted

“That one for sense and one for rhyme
I think sufficient at a time.”

On the other hand, Cowper, who had a high sense of the dignity and value of the art of poetry, said:

“If sentiment is sacrificed to sound
And truth cut short to make a period round,
I judge a man of sense can scarce do worse
Than caper in the morris dance of verse.”

Milton in his earlier poems used rhyme but avoided monotony by arranging them sometimes in couplets, sometimes alternately and sometimes at still longer intervals. In *Lycidas* the rhymes are very irregular and some lines have no corresponding ones. This irregularity of measure is well suited to an elegy; for the moans and sobs of grief, which an elegy represents, are always fitful and uncontrolled.

For *Paradise Lost*, Milton rejected rhyme altogether, and in his preface gives his reason in the brief and dictatorial statement that “Rhyme is no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age to set off wretched matter and lame metre — Rhyme to all judicious ears is trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers, fit quantity of syllables and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another; not in

jingling sounds of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients."

The music of blank verse depends largely upon the judicious distribution of pauses, on which point Dr. Samuel Johnson in his famous life of Milton declares that "the variety of pauses so much boasted by the lovers of blank verse, changes the measures of an English poet to the periods of a declaimer; and there are only a few skillful and happy readers of Milton who enable their audience to perceive where the lines begin or end." "Blank verse," said an ungenerous critic, "seems to be verse only to the eye."

Poetry may subsist without rhyme, but unrhymed English poetry will not often please. Yet whatever may be the advantages of rhyme, I cannot prevail on myself to wish that Milton had been a rhymer; for I cannot wish his work to be other than it is, yet, like other heroes, he is to be admired rather than imitated. "He that thinks himself capable of astonishing may write blank verse, but those that hope only to please must condescend to rhyme."

As usual, however, the poet is in the main right and the critic on the whole wrong, and following Milton's precedent most of the greater narrative poems in English have been unrhymed. I may mention as illustration Young's *Night Thoughts*, Cowper's *Task*, Wordsworth's *Excursion*, Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Browning's *The Ring and the Book* and Longfellow's *Hiawatha* and *Evangeline*.

How long ought the lines of a poem to be? There are occasionally lines of one or two or three or four or five or six syllables, but these are exceptions and there are no English poems of importance in which the majority of lines contain fewer than seven or eight syllables.

The octosyllabic line is peculiarly well adapted to rapid and vigorous narrative and is used by Scott in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake*. But it is obvious that so short a line gives little opportunity for ornament and embellishment. Accordingly the didactic and philosophic poets have commonly preferred lines of ten or twelve syllables. Lines of eight syllables consist only of the most essential words and the style though vigorous seems bald, but lines of ten or twelve syllables permit the freer introduction of qualifying adjectives and adverbs and thus permit more accurate and graceful statement, yet with an inevitable tendency toward the use of unnecessary expletive, or as it is bluntly called, padding. I may illustrate by the first couplet in Pope's translation of Homer, which is as follows:

"Achilles' wrath to Greece the direful spring
Of woes unnumbered, heavenly Goddess, sing."

Now, says the objector to diffuseness and the advocate of the short emphatic style, what would be lost if we strike out a useless adjective from each of those lines and read them thus:

"Achilles' wrath to Greece the spring
Of woes unnumbered, Goddess, sing."

In defense of this summary abridgment the critic asserts that it is certainly unnecessary to say that the spring of unnumbered woes is direful, or that a goddess is heavenly for that is implied in the word goddess. This method of criticism seems to me, however, to be too heroic, and if applied to *Paradise Lost*

"Would tear all beauties from the book
Like slashing Bentley with his desperate hook,"

If poems were to be deprived of all their ornamental parts and left as naked propositions like mathematical formulæ or logical syllogisms, we should have a result like that of the poet who was told by an exacting editor to boil his poem down till it contained no superfluous words. The poem was entitled *The Ballad of the Merchant*. When revised in accordance with the strict requirements of the censor, all that remained of it was the two words, "Trust, bust." Another illustration of the same sort of condensed epic may be given in the few warning words:

" Boy, gun,
Big fun,
Gun bust,
Boy dust."

Dr. Guest in his great work on *English Rhythms* demonstrates that the elements of English poetry are so numerous that if they were all used in all their possible combinations the result would be several million different metres. There are in actual use several hundred such forms so that it is not surprising to find that almost every great poet has a distinctive, or at least a favorite, measure. Chaucer's favorite stanza contained seven lines, arranged in three groups of rhymes, consisting respectively of the first and third, the second, fourth and fifth, and the sixth and seventh. It makes a very pleasant and graceful movement, as may be noticed by the following example:

" For thilke ground that bears the weedes wick
Bears eke the wholesome herbes and full oft
Next to the foule nettle rough and thick
The lily waxeth white and smooth and soft,
And next the valley is the hill aloft,

'And next the darke night is the glad morrow,
And also joy is next the fine of sorrow.'

Spenser's stanza in *The Faerie Queene* contains nine lines, arranged in three groups of rhymes, consisting respectively of the first and third, the second, fourth, fifth and seventh, and the sixth, eighth and ninth lines. In other words it consists of two quatrains with alternate rhymes and connected with each other by the fact that the first rhyme of the second quatrain is the same as that of the last line of the first one. Another peculiarity of the Spenserian stanza is that the last line is two syllables longer than the others. The measure has been much imitated by later poets and this example from Byron will show its stateliness and power:

" There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes
By the deep sea and music in its roar;
I love not man the less but Nature more
For these our interviews in which I steal
From all I may be or have been before,
To mingle with the universe and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal."

Byron's own distinctive measure is the ottava rima, borrowed from the Italian. The first, third and fifth lines, the second, fourth and sixth, and the seventh and eighth rhyme in groups, and the measure is so lively that it is said to dance a jig and end in a breakdown. To illustrate, I will give the stanza in which Byron tells of the difference between the English and the Italian language:

"I like the language, that soft bastard Latin
 That melts like kisses from a female mouth,
 And sounds as if it should be writ on satin
 With syllables that breathe of the sweet south,
 And gentle liquids, gliding all so pat in,
 That not a single accent seems uncouth,
 Like our harsh, northern, grunting guttural,
 That we're obliged to hiss and spit and sputter all."

From Byron to Burns the transition is easy. Everybody who quotes at all quotes,

"O wad some power the gifte gie us
 To see oursels as ithers see us!
 It wad frae monie a blunder free us
 An' foolish notion:
 What airs in dress and gait wad lea'e us,
 An' e'en devotion!"

This famous stanza is in fact an old troubadour measure which passed from France to England and from England to Scotland, and had been used by Ramsay and Ferguson and many other poets before Burns used it with such effect in the broad humor of *The Address to the Deil*, in the tender pathos of *the Lines to a Mouse* and in the terrible satire of *Holy Willie's Prayer*, that all other associations with the stanza were almost obliterated and the measure came to be looked upon as his.

Tennyson's distinctive stanza is a curious quatrain in which, instead of following the usual practice of making two couplets or rhyming the lines alternately, the poet joins the middle lines in a couplet and makes the first line rhyme with the fourth. For illustration I will quote one of the stanzas in which the poet speaks passionately of the friend for whom he wrote the most elaborate of all elegies, *In Memoriam*. He says:

“In these ears, till hearing dies,
One set, slow bell will seem to toll,
The passing of the sweetest soul
That ever looked with human eyes.”

I have detained you long and must speak of but one more form of the English stanza, and that the longest and most elaborate of all, the sonnet. The sonnet consists of fourteen lines, or two quatrains and two tercets, with an intricate rhyme scheme. It has often been looked upon as a mere ingenious trifle, and when Samuel Johnson was asked by a lady what he thought of Milton's sonnets, he replied somewhat as follows: “Madam, Milton was a genius who could carve a colossus out of a mountain, but could not carve heads upon cherry stones.” Johnson said, moreover, that Milton's sonnets did not deserve any particular criticism; for of the best it could only be said that they were not bad.

Johnson was to the eighteenth century a Sir Oracle and when he had spoken no dog dared to bark. In consequence of this harsh judgment the sonnet fell into disuse and disrepute, till Wordsworth restored it to public esteem by making it the medium of much of his own best poetry. He wrote hundreds of good sonnets of which one of the best is a plea for this form of verse, in which he gives a condensed history of its use. He says:

“Scorn not the sonnet; critic you have frowned
Mindless of its just honors; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camœns soothed an exile's grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf

Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow; a glowworm lamp
It cheered mild Spenser called from fairy land
To struggle through dark ways; and when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The thing became a trumpet; whence he blew
Soul-animating strains — alas! too few."

The sonnet seems to me most perfect when each quatrain and each tercet is distinct and ended by a period, and yet the four parts are strictly connected in thought. I know of no more perfect example than the sonnet written by Longfellow in memory of his wife, who, it will be remembered, was burned to death, her light summer dress having caught fire as she was sealing up some packages of her children's hair. As the organist in grief flies to his instrument for consolation, so the poet to whom the habit of writing in verse has become a second nature, resorts to his favorite measures. As Tennyson says:

"For the unquiet heart and brain
A use in measured numbers lies,
The sad, mechanic exercise
Like dull narcotics numbing pain."

In such a manner Longfellow gave this touching expression in his life-long grief:

"In the long, sleepless watches of the night,
A gentle face,— the face of one long dead —
Looks at me from the wall, where round its head
The night lamp casts a halo of pale light.
Here in this room she died; and soul more white
Never through martyrdom of fire was led
To its repose; nor may in books be read
The legend of a life more benedight.

There is a mountain in the distant west
That, sun-defying, in its deep ravines
Displays a cross of snow upon its side.
Such is the cross I wear upon my breast
These eighteen years, through all the changing scenes
The seasons, changeless since the day she died."

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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It is not so very long since it was a common opinion among scholars that Hebrew was the original language of man and that all other languages were derived from it. Cotton Mather, who subsequently became the most distinguished American clergyman and author of the seventeenth century, had been taught this theory in college and wrote a thesis to maintain that every "jot and tittle," every "jodh and horn" of the Hebrew language was taught to man directly by God himself.

The views of language that now prevail are very different. It is believed that God gave man a brain and a tongue and let him work out first a spoken and later a written language. As a result of the efforts of the different races of men to express and preserve their thoughts there are now about 1000 different languages and dialects.

The alphabet is the most wonderful and the most useful of all human inventions. The typewriter and the printing press, the telegraph and the telephone, wonderful and useful as they are, are much less essential to our welfare than the ordinary old-fashioned method of writing by hand. When you think of the power and mystery of writing, it is no wonder that in ignorant ages it was thought supernatural, men who could read and write were accused of witchcraft, and one of the meanings of the word "grammar" was "magic." I remember reading a story of a missionary to one of the South Sea islands who wrote on a chip a message to his wife asking her to send him a

hammer and a saw and some tools which he had forgotten. He gave the chip to a native and said "Take this to my house and bring me what my wife gives you." The man objected and said Mrs. So-and-So will laugh at me for bringing her a chip. The missionary assured him that she would not but would understand what was wanted, and so rather sheepishly the man did as he was told. The result was surprising. The lady at once handed him the tools desired but the man paid no attention to them. Instead, he seized the chip again and ran to the village shouting at the top of his voice, "These people are magicians, they can make chips talk, they can make chips talk."

English is the richest, most powerful and most convenient of the modern languages. It has the characteristics of the race that formed it, and the English language is widening its influence as rapidly and as steadily as the English-speaking race.

A proverb says "The style is the man." In the same way, we may say, the language shows the character of the people who make it and use it. If they are a strong, energetic people, they create a strong language. If they are an inventive people, they invent many words. If they are a practical people, they make their language plain and practical. If they are an inartistic people, they neglect consistency and symmetry. The English language reflects perfectly the character and history of the English race. It is strong, copious, practical, aggressive, but irregular and inconsistent.

Its origin is prehistoric, but its earliest written memorials show these characteristics:

1. A small and harsh vocabulary.

2. A cumbrous system of inflections.

3. An involved syntax.

Words were largely distinguished by their form as well as by their position and use. All verbs ended in *an* and were not easily mistaken for nouns. For instance, the verb thunder was *thunrian*, the noun thunder, *thunor*.

Nouns had five cases, adjectives had different forms for the masculine, feminine, neuter and plural, and verbs had a complicated conjugation. English is a sister language to German, and if it had been allowed to grow undisturbed would still have been very similar to German both in vocabulary and syntax.

But the English language was not allowed to develop in its own way. A people who spoke French conquered England, and that conquest altered the English language in three marked respects.

1. It brought in a prodigious number of French words.

2. It swept away most of the inflections and conjugations, so that nouns have now only two case-forms, a nominative and possessive, adjectives are not declined at all, and the changes in the form of the verb are very few.

3. The cumbrous laws of arrangement were abandoned. Laws of inversion and transposition like those which still perplex the German tongue were given up and writers felt at liberty to arrange the words in whatever order seemed to them most forcible and pleasing.

It took three hundred years for the old English to blend with French and form the modern English language. The Norman Conquest began in 1066 and it was not till 1362 that English superseded French in

the courts of law. By that time French and old English had been completely fused and in the new language thus formed Chaucer, the father of English poetry, and Wycliffe, the father of English prose, began the creation of a great and splendid literature.

Since their day English has gone on adding to its vocabulary just as fast as the race has added to its possessions and its knowledge.

If people have few possessions and few ideas they have few words, and as they acquire many possessions and many ideas they acquire many words, so that the dictionary of a nation is a complete index of its wealth and knowledge.

Every new invention requires a name. The words telegraph and telephone are new words because the things they represent are new. One of the present senses of the word "safety" came a few years ago when small wheels were substituted for the old-fashioned high bicycles. The verb "tramp" is old, but the noun "tramp" is new for we had no homeless vagabonds till a short time ago. A still later development of the word occurs when a steamer which does not run stately between two ports is spoken of as a tramp steamer, or still more briefly as a "tramp."

Now the people who speak the English language are scattered through very many countries and are engaged in very many different occupations, and as a consequence the English vocabulary has grown to be very large. There are only 6,000 words in the English Bible of 1611, but there are 100,000 in a modern English dictionary.

The English language has I think three points of extraordinary excellence and one great defect.

Its first great excellence is its extraordinarily rich and varied vocabulary.

The good results of the blending of the Saxon and the Latin in English can hardly be overestimated. Spanish is a musical and stately language, but it is not rich in synonyms. A Spaniard has but one word for length, longitude. If he measures the earth he speaks of its longitude, if he measures ribbon or tape he still talks about longitude, if he shoots a bear and measures the beast from muzzle to tail it is that he may ascertain its longitude. The Spaniard has a rope which he throws over the head of a horse or cow and thus catches the animal. It is a lasso. But in Spanish human society is united by lassoes. Even the affection of husband and wife, of father and son, of brother and sister are only the lassoes of the family. The Spaniard has at command only words derived from the Latin.

The German language has acquired a good many words from the Latin and Greek but not nearly so many as English and they are not nearly so freely used. The Latin and Greek words found in German are mostly learned and technical terms. If a German wished to translate the word *kingly*, he must say *Königlich*, but we may say with equal propriety and force, *kingly* or *royal*. In English we may say *brotherly love*, or *fraternal affection*, but in German there is no equivalent except for the first expression. In English we may say *hearty* or *cordial* but in German there is no precise synonym for "*herzlich*." In English we may say *stiff-necked* or *obstinate*. There is in German no precise equivalent for the latter word. In English you can say with equal appropriateness, *masticate* or *chew*. In German there is only "*kauen*."

English is the most flexible tongue in the world. It may give great variety to its expressions. You

may have in English a hearty welcome or a cordial reception, a loving wife or an amiable consort, a wretched man or a miserable individual, an old sailor, or an ancient mariner, a heavenly home or a celestial mansion. You may say an aperture at the apex or a hole at the top. You may retire to rest or you may go to bed. You may say that a man is fat and lazy or you may soften your statement and assert that he is portly and disposed to meditation. You may say of a book that it has not wit enough to keep it sweet or translate it as Dr. Johnson did into "It has not vitality sufficient to preserve it from putrefaction."

Rudyard Kipling tells of an Indian official who was so important a man that he never walked or rode about but always made tours of observation, was never paid for his work but received certain pecuniary emoluments, and his daughters did not fall in love and get married but contracted matrimonial alliances.

English is so rich a language that you may find beautiful specimens of poetry and eloquence made up almost entirely from either one of its two chief elements. Here is one from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. "The pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber whose window opened toward the sun-rising. The name of the chamber was Peace, and there he slept till break of day and then he awoke and sang." Here is a musical stanza from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*.

"It ceased but still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like that of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June."

In contrast with the above passages representing the Saxon vocabulary, here is one from Dr. Johnson

in which all the stately and significant words are from the Latin. He calls Iona "that illustrious isle whence savage clans and roving barbarians received the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion."

It is easy to find eloquent passages almost wholly made up of Saxon words, it is easy to find eloquent passages made up almost wholly of Latin words; but the most powerful and splendid passages of all are those in which both Saxon and Latin are judiciously blended. Take as an illustration a passage in which Milton describes how Satan is cast out of heaven.

"Him the Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky;
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms."

Let me illustrate in another way the wealth and freedom of the English language. Greek is universally regarded as the most polished language of antiquity. It has twenty-four letters, but because of the love of the Greeks for symmetry and euphony all words must end in a vowel or in the letters *n*, *r*, or *s*. There are thus only ten letters out of the twenty-four in which a word may end; but in the English any one of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet may be the last. The Greek language was like a Greek temple, polished and symmetrical, but restrained. The English language has the breath and variety of a landscape. Its words are not chiselled into columns, but they have the free growth and varied forms of trees.

The chief reason why English words may end in any letter is that they have so few inflections. But the loss of the monotonous inflections gives more than

variety of ending. It gives brevity. An English word derived from the Latin or Greek is nearly always at least one syllable shorter than the original. The Latin *multitudo* drops one of its four syllables and becomes multitude. A Latin word of three syllables like *pictura* becomes in English the word of two syllables, picture. A Latin word of two syllables like *fructus*, in English becomes fruit, and has but one.

We see the same difference in a less marked degree in comparing English and German words. German has *blume*, English has bloom; German says *eiche*, English says oak; German says *schule*, English says school.

This brevity is an immense practical advantage in speaking and writing. Voltaire said, "The English gain two hours a day by clipping their words; while that is an exaggeration, it is true that the conciseness of English makes it the pre-eminent commercial and telegraphic language of the world."

Leaving the consideration of the vocabulary, take up the second of the three excellences of English, the simplicity of its grammar. What a convenience it is to have only one form for the adjective instead of four, a different one for the masculine, feminine, neuter and plural. What an advantage to have no arbitrary genders.

Lastly, what an advantage the freedom of English syntax is. There are no rigid and complex laws of inversion and transposition such as impede and perplex a German poet or author.

The vocabulary, the inflections, the syntax of English are alike admirable. Nevertheless the language has one very serious defect. English spelling is shame-

fully clumsy and inconsistent. The same sound may be spelled in many ways, and the same letters may represent many different sounds.

There is urgent need of a two-fold reform in our spelling. First, Any letter or combination of letters should always represent the same sound, and second, superfluous letters should be dropped. To illustrate, the sound *f* should always be represented by the letter *f* and not sometimes by *ph*. But, says the objector, the word philosopher is from the Greek and the *ph* corresponds to the Greek *φ*. Yes, but frenzy is from the Greek also and in earlier English was spelled phrenzy. In the old geographies gulf is spelled gulph. We have made these changes capriciously, but the Spaniards have made them consistently and spell not only frenzy and gulf with an *f* but also philosopher (*filosofo*) and philologist (*filologo*).

We ought to do the same. We should drop superfluous letters. A wit was once asked to make a speech at a spelling reform convention. "I'll make it now," said he. "Drop me from the programme." For the same reason that we should spell program, program rather than programme, we should prefer *tho* to *though*, *shal* to *shall*, *hav* to *have*, *helth* to *health*, *hed* to *head*. Some people prefer *head* because they suppose it to be the historic spelling. That argument proves too much, for if early usage is to decide the spelling, it should be not *head*, but *heafod*. We have dropped the unnecessary letters out of many thousand words and the language is all the better for the change. *Dog* was once *dogge* and *ship* *shippe*. *Dolt* was spelled *dowlte*, and *ugly* *oughly*.

But our spelling needs much further simplification, and to make it as perfect as possible is a duty we owe to

the future generations who are to learn to speak and read English. It is not an exaggeration to say that in the education of English and American children a year's time is lost in mastering or trying to master the needless intricacies of our spelling.

But there is another reason for urging spelling reform at this time, and that is the fact that English is spreading very rapidly and that many uncivilized and semi-civilized nations will soon substitute it for their own tongues.

It is bad enough when the streets of a little village are crooked and irregular, but it is far worse when those of a great city are allowed to remain so. So it was bad enough to have such spelling as we have when Englishmen and their descendents were the only ones concerned; but English is rapidly becoming the language of many alien races in many different parts of the world, and it is a duty we owe to them to make the acquisition of English as easy as possible.

Trade follows the flag, and what is far more important the language of conquerers and rulers follows their government.

After the conquests of Alexander the Great, there were several centuries during which Greek was the dominant language of civilization and it spread widely in Europe, Asia, and Africa. When Greece fell, Rome built up a great empire and Latin became the language of France and Spain as well as Italy. Latin was for more than 1,000 years the common language of learned men in all parts of Europe.

But the power of Latin and the languages derived from it is declining.

Five hundred years ago there were probably three men who spoke French to one who spoke English.

Now three men speak English for every one who speaks French.

English is spoken to-day by 130,000,000 people. It is the ruling tongue in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. It is spoken, and well spoken, by 5,000,000 educated Hindoos. It is the language of the schools and law courts, of government and trade, in India. The newspapers are nearly all English and the 151 native dialects are rapidly disappearing.

English is spoken by the people who are building up a great empire for civilization in long benighted Africa. At Khartoum, in the heart of the dark continent, there will soon be an English college. Civilization follows the British arms very quickly. As Kipling says of the English in his poem on the battle of Omdurman and Kitchener's college:

"They terribly carpet the earth with dead and before
their cannons cool
They walk unarmed by twos and threes and send the
living to school."

In the same way it will not be long before English will be dominant in Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines.

The English language is now dominant in two of the six continents and is very widely used in each of the others. It is pre-eminently the language of commerce, of popular education, and of popular literature, and as they spread English will spread also.

In fact, it is not improbable that the spread of English will be as much wider than the former spread of Greek and Latin, as modern intercommunication is more rapid than ancient methods of intercourse between nations, and that the use of English may spread

over the world as a universal convenience just as the steam-engine, the steamship and the telegraph will soon be used in every country.

All the civilized nations already have some written symbols and elements of language in common. Throughout Christendom all nations divide and compute time in the same manner, so that the dial plate of a watch can be read as intelligently in one country as another. All nations now use the Arabic numerals, so that an arithmetic calculation made in the United States can be as well read in Germany, Italy, or France as in an English-speaking country. All civilized countries use the same musical notation, so that a musical score can be read by the musicians of every part of the globe. There is a great and growing vocabulary of the technical terms of chemistry and physics, of geology and biology and other sciences, which is understood by specialists of every nationality.

The new means of travel and communication have brought all nations very close together. They have many interests in common, but the curse of Babel is upon them. They cannot agree upon a course of action or understand each other's motives and wishes. In order to promote the welfare of mankind by making all existing knowledge and all new inventions the common property of all men, the world needs that some language should be taught in every schoolroom on the globe.

Finely Tennyson sings:

"Earth at last a warless world, a single race, a single tongue,
I have seen her far away, for is not earth as yet so young."

But Volapuk is an idle dream. A common language cannot be suddenly manufactured. It must grow as Greek grew, and as Latin grew, and as English has grown, gradually perfectly itself by inventing an expression for every material object, for every mental conception, for every moral aspiration.

A language rises and falls with the race that speaks it. A language is a looking-glass and gives a perfect reflection of the nation that uses it. The language of a nation is a thermometer and shows the temperature of the mental and moral atmosphere as perfectly as the mercury in a tube shows the state of the weather.

The English language is the best in the world because it has drawn more fully and deeply from all sources than any other language. Greek is only Greek, and Latin is only Latin, but English is a mixture of Greek, Latin, and Saxon, and in a smaller degree of fifty other tongues.

English has the strength of the languages of northern, united with the riches and graces of the languages of southern, Europe. It unites the muscles of Hercules and the beauty of Apollo. It is the pre-eminent language of literature. Shakespeare is the great modern world poet, and Shakespeare's genius is related to and dependent upon the English language. The words of Guizot, the philosophic French historian, are strictly true, "No English, no Shakespeare."

But English is pre-eminent not only in the drama, but in every department of poetry and prose. There is no modern epic comparable to *Paradise Lost*. No other country can show an array of novelists comparable to Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, or a group of essayists like Macaulay, De Quincey, Ruskin and Carlyle.

It is the cosmopolitan character of the language that has given it this extraordinary vitality, this double pre-eminence both as a means of buying and selling merchandise and as a means of exchanging the costlier treasures of thought. A tree grows large if its roots strike deep and spread wide in a fertile soil, and if it has abundant room to spread its branches to the sky.

Greek and Latin drew their nourishment from the soil of little countries round the little Mediterranean Sea. Modern English is not a product of little England. It absorbed a large part of the culture of Greece, Italy, and Judæa, and for the last three centuries it has been enriched by commerce with the whole globe. The Mediterranean Sea became a Roman lake, but the broad Atlantic and the still broader Pacific are rapidly becoming the lakes of the nations that speak the English tongue, and it is this world-assimilating power of the Saxon race that makes us think that the English language will some day be the universal language of man.

ALEXANDER POPE

ALEXANDER POPE

A name never to be pronounced by me without reverence. Doubtless the world has many great heroes. I am not going to bring him into comparison with the few highest and most immortal names. He is not one of the saints or prophets or deliverers of nations. Yet Pope, too, was a hero and a conqueror, and there is something pathetic and stimulating in the history of his life. The odds seemed so tremendously against him. He made so gallant a fight. He conquered so completely.

Weak, sickly, deformed, superficially educated, he seemed very unlikely to be able to sustain himself at all amid the stern competitions of life. Those who saw him in his childhood doubtless thought that so frail and sensitive a boy would die prematurely, or if he continued to live would glide quietly and ineffectively to his grave. That he, the poor pale-faced, little cripple, with his crutch, his headaches, should become one of the foremost men of his own day, and leave a high and permanent literary reputation, was antecedently very improbable. It did not seem likely that his feeble frame could bear the exhausting labor of composition on a large scale. Artists have often represented the supremacy of mind over brute force. Spenser has given us the beautiful picture of the virtuous and distressed Una and of the lion which forgot his fury, at the sight of her, became her guard, and ever by her looks conceived her intent. Milton tells us of the

“Dread bow of the huntress Dian,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard.”

To these pictures of woman's grace and virtue conquering savage beasts, I should like to add the representation of a pale, slender youth triumphing over the monsters, Disease and Pain, as David triumphed over the huge Philistine who had defied Israel. Heroic little Alexander, worthy of comparison with the great Alexander, for did he not conquer all the kingdoms of letters?

Few writers achieve fame by their first production, win repeated successes in different fields and never meet with any reverse of fortune or even relative failure. Campbell succeeded with the "Pleasures of Hope," as Pope succeeded with the "Essay on Criticism"; but Campbell not only never surpassed his first work, he never even equalled it. After numerous brilliant successes Byron had to see with mortification the failure of the dramas. Even Tennyson, with all his genius and patience, has now and then met with but dubious success and satisfied neither critics nor plain readers. But of the small number of writers who never miscalculate their powers or misjudge their subjects Pope is one. Nor was that because he was contented with small and easy tasks. On the contrary he repeatedly performed difficult feats, and in one case undertook and heroically accomplished a truly Herculean labor. I allude of course to the translation of the Iliad and Odyssey.

Pope was remarkably precocious. The Epistle to Arbuthnot, that interesting autobiographical poem, tells the story of two lives in these pathetic words:

"Why did I write! What sin to me unknown,
Dipped me in ink, my parents or my own?
As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
I lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.

I left no calling for this idle trade,
No duty broke, no father disobeyed.
The Muse but serv'd to ease some friend, not wife,
To help me through this long disease, my life."

He "lisp'd in numbers." At sixteen he had written a series of wonderfully finished and spirited pastoral poems in imitation of Theocritus. As mock antiques they are perfect, but the production of mock antiques is not in itself a very important end. There is an absurdity in calling English rustics Damon and Strephon, in calling upon Phœbus for inspiration, in worshipping Jupiter and sacrificing milk-white bulls in the forests of Thames. Pope himself in later life condemned these florid and artificial productions, in which as he briefly says "Pure description held the place of sense."

Windsor Forest is both better and worse than the Pastorals. It is better in that there is much description of actual scenes and much real history and genuine feeling. It is worse considered as a work of art in that the naturalness and truth are incongruously blended with the old mythological conventions, so that the poem is neither Greek nor English, but a curious hybrid, in which Pan, Ceres, Flora and Pomona are side by side with Henry and Edward, with Denham and Cowley, and Surrey, and the presiding goddess is sometimes Diana and sometimes Queen Anne.

As in the case of the Pastorals the execution of Windsor Forest was brilliant, but the faults of the design made the success of the work as a whole incomplete.

No work of this sort marks the Essay on Criticism. At the age of twenty-three years Pope gave us in this work a body of practical precepts on reading and

writing, which immeasurably surpass all others in our tongue. We may wonder at his omission of the greatest names in English literature, and at his mistaken prediction about the decay of the language. We may take exception to his extreme laudation of the classical school and adherence to the dramatic unities; but in spite of errors and limitations, the work as a whole is so wise and pithy and quotable as not only to have eclipsed all its many predecessors, but to have discouraged rivalry and maintained this special field of criticism alone to the present day; for Byron's English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, and Lowell's Fable for Critics while rivaling Pope in the brilliance of their attacks upon the folly and ignorance of critics, do not rival him at all in the value of his positive precepts on writing and on passing judgment upon writers.

The Essay on Criticism is a masterpiece. From beginning to end it is learned and acute, and brilliant with point and epigram. It is moreover what so many pointed and epigrammatic productions are not, immediately intelligible and uninterruptedly interesting. To appreciate fully Pope's skill in this production it is necessary to read the other most famous productions on the same theme. Pope's poem is far superior to that of Vida, fully equal to that epistle to Pollio on which the fame of Horace as a critic rests, and to the masterpiece of Boileau which was the English poet's immediate model. It is in fact almost a perfect poem of its kind, and is surpassed only by poems of an altogether different sort. Praise of it is sometimes qualified by saying that it is a marvelous production considered as the work of a youth of twenty-one. It does not seem to me to need leniency on that score.

Pope's mind had already reached maturity, and the merits and defects of the poem are those which are characteristic of his works to the end, and were inherent in the man. The merits are sense, clearness, finish. The limitations are shallowness, tameness, onesidedness. Scarcely anything is his own but the polished form. The poem illustrates his own idea of composition:

" True art is nature to advantage dressed,
What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed."

The ideas in general are borrowed and conventional. Where they are not so they are, sometimes at least, erroneous and even ridiculous, but nevertheless more interesting than the correcter judgments borrowed from preceding critics or echoed from public opinion. To praise Homer, Virgil, Aristotle, and Longinus is what we should expect every young scholar to do. To praise Dryden, Walsh, and Roscommon, and say nothing about Shakespeare, Spenser or Milton, is not what we should expect a young and enthusiastic English poet to do. Yet though as literary criticisms the judgments are so ridiculously out of proportion, they really add much to the value, or at any rate to the interest, of the poem by infusing a little personal feeling into it. The compliments are exquisitely turned and the expressions of gratitude are creditable alike to the head and the heart of the writer. Would that Pope could have developed more fully the genial side of his nature and have suppressed that irritable and often senseless jealousy which appears slightly even in this production. Pope is not a great personality. He is not a thinker. He does not speak with authority. He has no original ideas. He borrows and files,

but does not create. He does not gather material from all sources like Shakespeare or Milton, and fuse them into a new mass by deeper insight and stronger emotion. He does not like these great artists transform his materials and put a new soul into them. He does not show us the active intellect and loving, suffering heart. He does not set before us men and women throbbing with life. He is an industrious lapidary who picks up rough stones and sets and polishes them. As such praise him, for in that not unimportant field of art he is unequalled. But how he shrinks when you bring him into comparison with the real interpreters of the human heart. It would be manifestly unreasonable to compare a poem on the principles of criticism, a poem so technical and limited by its subject, with any drama or epic; but a comparison of Pope's *Essay* with Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, or with the same writer's *Hints from Horace*, or with Lowell's *Fable for Critics*, shows very clearly the fundamental differences between the classical and the romantic schools of poetry. In Pope the ideas though true and judicious are tame and commonplace. The poem is cold and almost impersonal. Its merit is that of artistic expression. To some indeed the self-restraint and self-suppression of the author will seem an additional merit. They will say that this is a case in which the artist should present his subject and keep himself out of view. Others will say that the reason that Pope gives so few of his own thoughts or emotions is that he had little originality, few ideas and feeble emotions. It is probable that it is not artistic suppression of himself in the interest of his theme that causes him to say so little about himself, but that when he had expressed his admiration

of ancient literature and his gratitude to his models and friends he had nothing else really original to say.

On the other hand when Byron sits down to write, his own brain is so fertile and his passions are so strong that all previous laws of art are disregarded and a new type is created. The diminutive and commonplace plan develops into something far more powerful though far less artistic. It is not the artist polishing his gems but the furious Titan wielding his club.

Similarly Lowell's personality was far too strong for him to write a merely imitative work. Pope could adapt Horace and Boileau, but when Lowell wrote a *Fable for Critics* it was unlike anything the world had ever seen before. Instead of being a skillful echo it is a series of independent judgments upon his contemporaries. It is full of the author's own ideas and feelings expressed in the most unique and astonishing figures.

The *Essay on Man* has a pre-eminence like that of the *Criticism*. It is the one successful didactic poem upon the subject of the divine government of the world. It says substantially all there is to be said upon the subject and says it more compactly and forcibly than any one else has succeeded in doing. Every scholar reads it and many of its phrases are current arguments and household words. Dr. Samuel Johnson and some others have disparaged and suspected it; but to paraphrase his own words the objections "of single cavaliers can very little weaken the general evidence" afforded by public esteem.

The professed purpose of the *Essay* is to vindicate the ways of God to man. Its theme is thus seen to be as old as religion and philosophy; for all religions

and all philosophies are attempted explanations of God's government of the world. The Bible from Genesis to Revelations is a vindication of God and a promise to man. The aim of poetry, like that of religion and philosophy, is to lift man above the material world and into the realm of faith and hope and love. Poetry therefore has also frequently made the effort to vindicate the justice of God. The book of God is such an effort. *Paradise Lost* was written with that intent. In *Memoriam* is the supreme effort in the nineteenth century to reconcile the sufferings of man with the wisdom and goodness of God.

When we begin to compare Pope's *Essay* with the preceding and succeeding poems on the same theme, the first thing that impresses the reader is the dry, argumentative formal tone of the composition. In *Paradise Lost* there is an interesting story, there are human and angelic beings with whose fortunes we can sympathize, there is all that imagination and emotion can do to give epic grandeur and sublimity to the argument.

In *Memoriam* lacks plot, but human sympathy is sustained by gathering the argument about the untimely death of a single noble and gifted man. The *Essay on Man* is destitute of these aids and presents itself as a mere didactic treatise in verse. It is thus seen to belong to that peculiar epoch in our literature when reason for a time usurped control over both imagination and feeling. In the preceding century, under the impulse of Puritanism, there had been so much religious mysticism, such extravagant theological speculation, such an extraordinary development of the supernatural, such ponderous systems built upon revelation, that a great reaction had at last been

brought about and men had turned away from the unaided power of human reason. The spirit of controversy had not ceased but had gradually changed its form. In the Puritan epoch the Bible had been gradually accepted as a divine revelation and man had argued about its doctrines. Romanist, High Churchman, and Puritan contended furiously, but ineffectually. They could not convince each other, but they did very nearly convince the great passive body of neutral thinkers that they were all alike wrong. When at last the theologians of different parties desisted, by reason of exhaustion, and began to estimate the gains and losses of the protracted war of books, pamphlets and sermons, they were astonished to find that the theological bone of contention had almost vanished and that they had created a nation of sceptics and rationalists.

Of course the rationalists had not possession of the field for any length of time. The religious instincts of men are innate and indestructible; under Whitefield and Wesley and a multitude of others within and without the established church, religion soon reasserted its supremacy; but it is important to remember that the *Essay on Man* is the expression of the opinions of men in this brief interregnum of religious faith, that it is the chief literary work between the age of Puritanism and the age of Methodism, and of the evangelical churches; or, to recur again to an earlier illustration, that it represents thought midway between *Paradise Lost* and *In Memoriam*.

Pope nowhere in the *Essay* appeals to the Bible as a divine revelation, or draws any argument from anything contained in it. He has nothing to say about the person or work of Christ, and thus by im-

plication denies the doctrines of the special inspiration of the scriptures, of the fall of man and of the atonement. It is this ignoring of Christianity, this assertion of the sufficiency of reason without revelation that led to many of the contemporary and later attacks upon the poem as irreligious.

Although Pope has been regarded as an enemy by many orthodox theologians he has also been unacceptable as a champion by many rationalistic philosophers. When in 1754 the Academy of Berlin proposed as a thesis for a prize essay "An examination of Pope's system," Lessing published a pamphlet to prove that Pope's essay contained no system, but was a mere patch-work. De Quincey says that "the poem is the realization of anarchy," and that the numerous ellipses in the thought may be filled up in such different ways as to make the bias of the poem religious or sceptical. As illustrations of inconsistency we are pointed to the passage beginning:

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul,"

which is said to be an expression of pure pantheism, and then told to compare the passage with the lines:

"The worker from the work distinct was known,
And simple reason never sought but one."

I will only say that such statements do not seem to me absolute contradictions, but simply different sides of the same truth. Body and soul in man are parts of one whole, and yet we believe that the soul is distinct from the body. Another alleged inconsistency is Pope's treatment of the subject of animal food. In one passage he deplores flesh eating as a crime and a

source of misery. He depicts a state of innocence and happiness in which

“Man walked with beast, joint tenant of the shade,
The same his table and the same his bed;
No murder cloth'd him and no murder fed.
Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb.

* * *

But just disease to luxury succeeds
And every death its own avenger breeds;
The fury-passions from that blood began,
And turned on man a fiercer savage, man.”

The critic then tells us that less than 100 lines further on in the poem Pope in describing the progress of civilization represents man's increasing skill in hunting and fishing as a part of his advance: Some wise patriarch of the tribe taught these arts.

“He from the wond'ring furrow call'd the food,
Taught to command the fire, control the flood,
Draw forth the monsters of the abyss profound,
Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground.”

Of course there is a superficial inconsistency here, which the author of the poem saw as clearly as anybody else; but he credited his readers with more common sense than some of them possess. The inconsistency can be urged just as well against the book of Genesis, and against every poem and history of creation which represents the first period of man's existence as a golden age of innocence and ignorance when man lived in a garden and tilled the ground, and then represents him as sinning and then under new conditions acquiring arts unnecessary before and in spite of wars

and cruelties gradually developing in intellect and virtue.

Of course I do not believe that Pope's reasoning and illustrations are always free from error. Nothing of the kind. Pope like the rest of men was fallible. But the point I wish to make is this, that the kind of objections that have been referred to can be made and have been made against every creed, every system of philosophy and every book, including the Bible itself. These philosophers, logicians and theologians who disparage Pope's argument should remember that they live in glass houses. Is the Westminster confession unassailable? Can any one frame a definition of the doctrine of the trinity or of the atonement that will satisfy all orthodox Christians, to say nothing of unbelievers. Are the metaphysicians agreed among themselves? Is there no room for Browning's sneer?—when he makes Cleon say:

“ I have written three books on the soul
Proving absurd all written hitherto
And putting us to ignorance again.”

If not to make an argument that satisfies everybody and sets all controversy at rest is to fail, then of course Pope failed in this poem; but if that be failure, every other writer whatever has failed also.

I protest against any extreme disparagement of Pope on the ground that there are flaws in his reasoning. The important question is not what are his defects but what are his merits. It is well to remember that Pope was the favorite poet of the greatest of modern metaphysicians, Immanuel Kant, and was habitually quoted by him in his philosophical lectures. The very eminent Scotch professor Dugald Stewart in

lectures delivered to his classes in the University of Edinburg has said that the *Essay on Man* is "the noblest specimen of philosophical poetry which our language affords: and with the exception of a very few passages, contains a valuable summary of all that human reason has been able hitherto to advance in justification of the moral government of God." The judgment of Dr. Samuel Johnson is unfavorable to the *Essay*, and his novel of *Rasselas* is an elaborate reply to the system of optimism which Pope expounds, which Johnson believed hostile to revelation and good morals. Yet Johnson himself says of the natural judgment of plain readers unsophisticated by the criticism of professional heresy-hunters and fault-finders: "So little was any evil tendency discovered that, as innocence is unsuspecting, many read it for a manual of piety." Plain people I venture to think will continue so to do for many generations. Commentators may worry themselves over the alleged inconsistency between Saint Paul and Saint James; for Paul says that we are saved by faith, and James that faith without works is dead; but plain people do not usually perceive or care for such alleged discrepancies. They see all truth cannot be presented at a time, and that the effort to qualify every statement so as to make it absolutely true would make it worthless. The Bible says, "Children, obey your parents." Does it mean, "Obey your parents if they command you to lie and steal?" No; it lays down broad general principles, and leaves to man's judgment the task of modifying them by other general principles. Every proverb is only a half truth. Add the other half to it and it would cease to be epigrammatic, quotable — would fall flat. Take for example the lines: "Early to bed and early to rise, makes a

man healthy, wealthy and wise." Will a man who gets up early and goes to bed early grow wealthy and wise if he spends his days in idleness and vice? No, it would be better for the health and wealth of some persons if they would frequently stay in bed all day; but then such exceptions and qualifications as might be made to the proverb would be too heavy for its wings of verse and would keep it from flying abroad on a mission of usefulness.

I suppose every one dissents from statements in every book he reads. Natural endowments, processes of education, and the experiences of different persons are so various that no two educated minds can ever be expected to agree exactly in all their opinions. The *Essay on Man* as a whole gives me pleasure, and, what is far more, strength and comfort; but from my angle of vision there are some faults of illustration, of tone and of omission. I do not like Pope's disparagement of Bacon and Cromwell. It seems to me that in regard to Bacon, as in some other passages, Pope has sacrificed truth to epigram and that he did not fairly weigh the laborious and unselfish labors of the philanthropic man of science against some admitted weaknesses of character. Bacon was not a saint or hero; but he was, I think, far from being a bad man, and almost infinitely far from being the "meanest of mankind." Pope's error as to Cromwell was more excusable. He was a Catholic and a natural partisan of the house of Stuart. He wrote too before the investigations of Carlyle and others had cleared Cromwell's memory from royalist aspersions. Pope sometimes, I think, pushes his argument too far. When he is illustrating the important truth that there are compensations in life

and that the diffusion of happiness is general he seems to me extreme and almost flippant in the lines:

"See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
The sot a hero, lunatic a king."

Similarly, I do not like the expression, "Beads and prayer books are the toys of age." But in spite of a few jarring phrases or false illustrations the main propositions of the poem seem to me true and noble. The three fundamental ideas of the poem are I think represented by these passages: First, as to the government of God the poet says:

"Submit in this or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear;
Safe in the hand of one disposing Pow'r
Or in the natal or the mortal hour."

This is less poetical and beautiful than Whittier's:

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

But it affects me in the same way. I believe it and am helped by it and like to repeat it. This is what Pope teaches about God. What has he to say about man and the source of his happiness? On this point I will quote but one couplet, that wonderful couplet which Ruskin so much admired and has eulogized as the most perfect expression of sympathy in English literature:

"Never elated, while one man's oppress'd;
Never dejected, while another's blest."

It expresses the true spirit of philanthropy. There is no private happiness. How can any one's joy be perfect while any of his fellows are suffering, and how can he be without some large measure of satisfaction if he sees his fellow men happy? It is like Paul's glorious self-abnegation when he says, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for the sake of my brethren according to the flesh."

There are greater religious poems in our literature than the *Essay on Man*. *Paradise Lost* before it and *In Memoriam* after it exalt the imagination and stir the affections more profoundly. But if there are tides in spiritual things as in material ones, if there was a fuller and deeper flow of faith and hope in the 17th century than in the 18th, and if the great tide of affection and belief is again rising in the age in which we live, let us not undervalue the feebler manifestation that has come to us from the time of the intervening ebb — tide of spirituality and sentiment. Let us avoid narrow antipathies and unjust depreciations. The *Essay on Man* is not a mere piece of tinsel and artificial rhetoric. Marred here and there as it is by affectation and extravagance, it is nevertheless a great monument of careful, earnest thought and deep, generous emotion. In the words of De Quincey, borrowed from Shakespeare, words which De Quincey however applies more broadly to Pope's character, the essay is not "dust a little gilt, but fine gold a little dusted"; and I for one attach little importance to the petty depreciation of critics who have not themselves given us a memorable sentiment or a noble line.

"Let such teach others who themselves excel,
'And censure freely who have written well."

Among Pope's virtues, a high place must be given to his pecuniary disinterestedness. The proverbial love of money has blemished many a fair fame and led many an otherwise noble man into subserviency and meanness. Pope was a practical man of the world and knew the great value of money, yet he was one of the very few men who refused an offered pension and preferred a manly independence.

There are, however, two serious abatements to the pleasure with which I read Pope's works and contemplate his character. One is his indelicacy and the other his bad temper. In regard to these offenses it has been urged in excuse that the age in which Pope wrote was coarse and abusive and that he was no worse than most contemporary authors. The defense seems to me true, but insufficient. Pope was delicacy itself as compared with Swift; but Swift was bad and mad, and his example should screen nobody. The truth is, Pope, like most men, was a beast-god. But in the case of most men the god subdues or at any rate silences the beast. But there are a few men who cannot, or at any rate do not, resist the impulse to write all they think. The "fierce light which beats upon a throne" exposing all the weaknesses and vices of kings, is nothing to that fierce light which beats upon the character of a Pope or a Byron who is irresistibly impelled not merely to act out his real life, but to record it in language so vivid, forcible and epigrammatic that it cannot be forgotten. The vices and vulgarities of common men sink out of sight, the vices and vulgarities of men of genius are preserved by the splendors and virtues with which they are inseparably associated.

"In amber we observe the forms of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms." All that can be said

in defense of Pope's indecency is that he was not exceptionally bad, but was exceptionally gifted. But the full weight of his offense remains. There were good and pure as well as bad and impure men in his age, and he should have been among the former. He was a poet and it is the special function of a poet to give men "nobler lives and nobler cares."

The *Dunciad* is an unpleasant book. Much of its censure is just; but it is nevertheless disagreeable to see mean and foolish men pursued so implacably and to see so much genius for expression wasted on trifling persons and themes. I think Pope gives us a true account of its origin when he says:

"Out with it, *Dunciad*! let the secret pass,
That secret to each fool, that he's an ass:
The truth once told (and wherefore should we lie)
The Queen of Midas slept, and so may I."

We learn from Pope's biography that he often called for paper and ink several times in a night lest he should lose a thought that had occurred to him. When it was once safely recorded his mind was relieved and he was able to go to sleep. I suppose that when Pope went to bed smarting with indignation at some of the cruel lampoons and stupid or malicious misjudgments of his poems, in spite of himself his mind kept recurring to them. It was second nature for him to put his thoughts into verse, and so without effort and almost without design a great part of the poem was written. At that point the test of character came. A better man would have suppressed the baser parts and generalized and ennobled the remainder. Pope did do so to some extent. The poem has its exquisite, its useful and noble passages; but it is nevertheless unworthy of the pen of him who wrote:

"Good nature and good sense must ever join;
To err is human, to forgive divine!"

and wrote still finer lines:

"Teach me to feel an other's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me."

I wish that there were not so much alloy mixed with Pope's gold; but in books as in nature the wise will accept with thankfulness the good he finds and lay aside the bad with as little ado as possible. 'Tis of no use to complain of the bones in a shad, if you can't get a shad without them. Much as I deprecate the rash and needless mutilation of a great author, I nevertheless think that an expurgated edition of Pope from which some youthful licenses and some later spleen should be left out, would be a boon to the academic public and an act of justice to Pope himself; for a worthy man ought to be protected by his friends even from his own follies and sins.

To return to the pleasanter task of speaking of Pope's virtues. His poems are full of humane, liberal and noble sentiments on every subject. To begin with he was an advocate of liberty. Browning in his poem *A Lost Leader*, speaking of the great champions of freedom says:

"Shakespeare was with us, Milton was of us, Burns, Shelley, were with us, they watch from their graves." He might have included Pope in the list, for Pope uses the keen weapon of his satire repeatedly against "the enormous faith of many made for one" and against "the right divine of kings to govern wrong."

At a time when dissenters from the established religion were still subject to many disabilities and the principle of religious liberty was not generally recognized, Pope took the enlightened and Christian ground that religions were to be judged by their fruits, that conduct and not opinion was the test of character. His familiar words are:

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”

In summing up his moral system he tells us that, “Virtue alone is happiness below” and that men are “Happier as kinder in whate'er degree,” and that “Height of bliss” is “but height of charity.”

His warmest praises are given to the Man of Ross, the practical philanthropist, and his solution of the problem of poverty is the simple Christian one of the just and kindly use of money as God's stewards:

“To Worth or Want be bounty given
And emulate the care of Heav'n.
Wealth in the gross is death, but life diffus'd,
As poison heals in just proportion us'd.”

The noblest passage amid the many beauties of Coleridge's poems is:

“He prayeth best who loveth best
All things both great and small,
For the dear God who loveth us
He made and loveth all.”

Pope has the same spirit; as he walked in Windsor Forest he had no sympathy with the coarse and cruel pleasures of the sportsman. His sympathies were all with the innocent victims, and he laments:

"Oft as in airy rings they skim the heath,
The clamorous lapwings feel the leaden death:
Oft, as the mounting larks their notes prepare,
They fall, and leave their little lives in air."

Pope was a faithful friend. He was a generous benefactor, and a devoted son. There are to me no more exquisitely tender and beautiful lines in our literature than those in which the poet speaks of his aged mother:

"Me let the tender office long engage,
To rock the cradle of reposing age,
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make languor smile and smooth the bed of death,
Explore the thoughts, explain the asking eye,
And keep a while one parent from the sky."

If this had been a mere wish or dream, it would have been praiseworthy. If it had been the expression of the penitential regret of one whose actual conduct had been thoughtless or undutiful, it would have revealed a kind and amiable nature. The mere desire to do good is in a high degree meritorious, for our desires are wholly our own, whereas our actual conduct is largely dependent on the will of others, or because of our weakness falls far short of our intentions. But Poe's care of his mother was no pious wish or beautiful dream, or brief and fitful manifestation of his affection, but a patient, life-long devotion. He was a bachelor and an only child, and the natural tenderness of his disposition was concentrated upon one person; he remains in our history one of the very few men who have had both opportunity and inclination fully to discharge the debt due to a self-sacrificing parent. Most men and women imperfectly realize the

labors and sufferings of their parents in their behalf, until they are called upon to undergo similar labors and sufferings in behalf of their own children. Life is thus a beautiful and continual system of ever-perpetuated benevolence, in which hearts kindled to gratitude by the affection of one generation repay that affection by care for the succeeding race. But now and then we find a son who gives to his father or his mother gift for gift, patience for patience, vigil for vigil, solicitude for solicitude, and such a son was Alexander Pope.

Pope's virtues were inspired, as all real virtue is inspired, by his religion, and it is wonderful that he had so much real piety of heart and life with so little support from external conditions or hereditary faith. It was his misfortune to be brought up a Roman Catholic in a Philosophic age. He had outgrown the religious opinions in which he had been trained and every thoughtful person knows the danger there is that, when the early supports and associations of moral obligation are thus destroyed, the moral sense itself will perish with them. When religion has not a body and a home in most cases it soon ceases to have a soul and an existence. But though when Pope reached maturity his reading and thinking compelled him to regard as false and worthless much that he had been taught to believe was supremely true and sacred, yet he did not on that account fall, as so many have done, into either infidelity or vice, but retained an unimpaired faith in the moral government of God and in the moral obligations of man. He teaches, I think, the central truth of religion when he says:

“ Submit — in this or any other sphere
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear.

Safe in the hands of one disposing Power,
Or in the natal or the mortal hour."

This faith was, I think, the anchor to his soul which kept him from destruction amid the storms and treacherous currents of the sea of life.

His other safeguard was a noble ambition. The great purpose and passion of his life was to be a great poet and to elevate the literature of his country. No man ever had more of the artistic conscience. He spared no pains to make his work as perfect as it could be made. And he succeeded. His poems are practically indestructible. No one can take any of his poems as materials from which to construct a similar but nobler product. His works are not, like those of many an author, a quarry to which a greater genius may go for half hewn stones, but they are a palace of art in which every stone is polished and set firmly in position. A good many men have soared higher, or plunged deeper, or ranged more broadly. Many have sung more sweetly or roared more loudly or reasoned more subtly. Our literature has had a great many irregular, dazzling, ephemeral geniuses, and it may well be that in a century or two some authors who have a great present reputation will follow Marlowe, and Cowley and Chatterton and other stormy or extravagant writers into early oblivion. I doubt the permanence of most of the works of Shelley and Swinburne, also most of Wordsworth and of Browning. All these great writers will survive in a few choice poems and extracts; but their works as a whole are loosely constructed and wayward. All cloud splendors soon change into common and disagreeable mists. If Pope's success is not of the highest, it is of the most solid kind. He won

it by intense, persistent, well-directed labor in both composition and revision.

“The mob of gentlemen who write with ease” will never be his rivals. It is sometimes foolishly said that for a poet Pope is governed too much by his reason and too little by his imagination and notions. It cannot be. The man who is not always governed by his reason is a mad man. Reason must always be the mainspring of both imagination and emotion and a writer who discards reason will soon find that the reasonable part of mankind will discard him. Pope, I think, benefited our poetry incalculably both in form and substance. It is true that the works of his predecessors, Shakespeare and Milton, are far more worthy of imitation, but they are far less imitable. Pope’s great excellences of thought and expression seemed to the public to be more attainable, and since his time English poetry has never tolerated the absurdity in thought and crudeness in expression that were previously common. He was a great national educator and raised the taste of both readers and writers to a higher level. Goldsmith, Gray, Tennyson and others have since supplemented his work, but not reversed or superseded it. When Wordsworth thought he had done so, he was mistaken. It is true that Pope’s favorite, almost his exclusive measure, the heroic couplet, no longer dominates English poetry as, through his influence, it did for nearly a century. But his careful rhymes, his propriety of diction, his ease, his vivacity, his melody, are still practically our standard. Since Pope’s day no matter how interesting a poet’s thought or how strong his emotions, he is not acceptable unless he shows care and finish in his style. Burns and Byron, the most powerful and spontaneous of the later poets,

labored on the details of their technique as they would not have done, if the example of Pope and his school had not been before them. Even Wordsworth, though in theory he opposed Pope, was in practice not a little indebted to his example.

Like most, if not all, very great authors, Pope was a man of one work. He gave his life to literature with undivided enthusiasm, and literature will continue to hold him in grateful and honorable remembrance. Zeal for literature inspired his own labors, and zeal for literature prompted much of his severe criticism on those who trifled with it or degraded it.

MACAULAY

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Macaulay's ancestors on his father's side for several generations had been Presbyterian ministers. His father and mother were Evangelicals of the strictest sort and by them and by their set his early fondness for light literature and for the theatre, and the freedom of his religious opinions, were looked upon with disfavor and alarm. As an indication of the way in which the Evangelical party in England looked upon him I may recall the fact that Wm. Morley Panshon, the most eminent of English Methodist orators, in his lecture on Macaulay expressly calls him a prodigal son. This must be regarded as a mere expression of regret that Macaulay did not profess and advocate evangelical opinions, and not in any sense as reflecting upon his moral character. There was never any question as to his honesty, truthfulness, temperance, and general propriety of life. Nor did he ever oppose the religious views of his father's circle. The nearest approach to such opposition was an occasional expression of impatience at bigotry and narrowmindedness. As is well known, the great English religious and philanthropic meetings are held in Exeter Hall, London, and Macaulay once scandalized and angered the evangelical party by characterizing their oratory as "the bray of Exeter Hall."

He dropped a good deal of his father's austere religion, but the effects of his early training are seen in the purity of his writings and in the general uprightness and philanthropy of his life. Macaulay was a very earnest and sincere champion of liberty. He

strenuously advocated Catholic Emancipation, and the great Reform Bill, and he wrote a brilliant, fascinating, and wonderful history of the great revolution by which England definitely became a constitutional monarchy. A still nobler service to the cause of liberty and one that, in my judgment, ranks Macaulay among the very great benefactors of mankind, was his preparation of a code of laws for India by which every Hindoo was granted all those securities for life, liberty and property that are the boast of the Anglo-Saxon race in England and in this country. To Macaulay must also be ascribed most of the credit for the teaching of English as the language in which instruction is given in the government schools in India. Before his time the policy had been to develop the native languages and translate European books into them; but Macaulay showed conclusively that Western science and Hindoo mythology would not blend, and that before any effective scientific teaching could be done, the Hindoo fables must be discredited and dropped.

Three things especially strike me in regard to Macaulay, his amazing knowledge, his practical sense, and his unparalleled gifts of illustration and exposition. These qualities made him an overpowering talker, writer and Parliamentary debater. He had more knowledge than other men, he could recall and arrange his knowledge with greater readiness, he could express it with greater clearness, brevity and emphasis. His life was thus one long and practically unbroken series of worldly successes. He was the very highest type of the practical statesmen and man of the world, and yet there are good and wise people not a few who assign to him a comparatively humble place as a writer because they think there is so little of essential truth,

and of spiritual insight in his writings. . One wit when asked to give a list of works of fiction placed Macaulay's History at the head. Another writer has called it a 'huge Whig pamphlet.' In truth Macaulay investigated his facts with tireless patience and sought to write with entire impartiality; but his natural sympathies were narrow and many things were hidden from him. He admired common sense and practical worldly success. Addison was his ideal; a spiritual genius like Bunyan seemed to him little short of crazy. He had so little idealism that every man who gave his life to remote and spiritual ends seemed to him a dreamer and a visionary. Even in politics he rarely appeals to first principles. He disliked tyranny and advocated constitutional government; but he had no faith in the stability of any democracy, and believed that popular government in this country would prove impracticable. He detested the radicals of England and opposed the Chartist movement, though all the Chartist demands were practical as our experience proves. His life showed something of the same narrowness of sympathy and understanding. He would not subscribe to any fund for the benefit of destitute or needy authors. Why, he said, should we encourage authors to write inferior and unreadable books? Good authors do not need help, for their books sell, and bad authors ought not to have it, for the sooner they cease to be authors the better. Such is Macaulay's argument; but how shallow a thing it is. It is notorious that superficial and amusing books produce the largest immediate returns, and that there is hardly an instance in which a book of great and permanent value to the world ever yielded any great amount of money to the writer. Thousands of men have gotten rich by

writing news, or politics, or novels, or light plays, but who ever got rich by writing psalms, or gospels, or true philosophies, or genuine poetry, or real science? No man can serve God and Mammon. The books which greatly serve God and help men are not those that bring much money to their authors. They that preach the gospel are able to live by the gospel, but not to grow rich by it; and so those among writers who are God's true prophets are in some way fed, or else their work could not be done, but they are not commonly rewarded by riches or worldly honors, but by deeper and more enduring inner satisfactions.

Macaulay was a very entertaining and very useful writer, but not a very great one. He wrote for the average intelligence. He took popular subjects and treated them in a popular manner. Unlike De Quincey, he never tries to clear up obscure questions or unravel difficulties. He evaded intricate discussions and philosophic depths. He wants to be at all times entertaining and brilliant. He is so, but frequently at the expense of truth. There is so much of antithesis, paradox, and exaggeration that one is never quite sure that any statement is really true. Macaulay knew and admitted his habit of exaggeration, and his defense has much force in it. He says in effect that men's perceptions and feelings are dull, and that you need to exaggerate in order to produce a true effect, as a statue on a high pedestal must be of heroic size in order to seem life-like. It is easy to answer by similes and to say with Sir Philip Sidney that one should not put pepper and spice in every dish. Or, objecting to over ornamentation as much as to over stimulation, say that it is enough to wear jewels in the ears without also putting them in the nose and lips. But to drop

figures and speak plainly, I think that no one ought to neglect Macaulay but no one ought to depend mainly upon him for information. On the whole I like the essay on Milton as well as any of his writings. It was his first great essay and was written in early manhood when sentiment and enthusiasm are strongest. Under the fascination of a great character and a great genius Macaulay for a moment almost becomes a hero worshipper. He says "we imagine to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word, the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand, the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood, the privilege of reading Homer to him or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips." But Macaulay has not the self-abandonment of a truly great man any more than the weakness of a truly little one. He checks himself and returns to his habitual prudence and reserve with the comment that "these are perhaps foolish feelings." Perhaps; but I cannot resist the thought that if Macaulay had oftener yielded to such feelings he would have been a greater and a better man. Of the Puritan he says that "the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach." Is it not possible that the tone of Macaulay's mind would have been improved by striving a little more earnestly for those spiritual ideals which he thinks unattainable? But to me the crowning instance of his lack of spirituality and faith and insight is his view of the function and nature of poetry. To him poetry is mere illusion and the poet a man of unsound mind. It flourishes best, he says, when language is in its rudest state and in the darkest age. This implies that as

civilization advances it will gradually disappear, like any other popular superstition or delusion. This seems to me a radical error, contradicting the great general consciousness of man. In every nation the poet has been regarded as a seer and a prophet. He sees the spiritual truths hidden from others, and he utters them with authority as the especial mouthpiece of God. Religion and poetry stand or fall together. Both appeal to the intuitions as against the senses. Both uphold the unseen, both in a word rest upon faith, and the degree of one's faith in spiritual things, the degree in which one is raised above the material and sensual is the real measure of greatness of mind and heart.

Macaulay said of the Puritans: "As a body they had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies." May we not paraphrase these sentences and apply them to Macaulay himself and say that he has done his utmost to decry and disparage poetry and that his low estimate of the greatest and most enduring of the fine arts will forever stamp him, in spite of all his stores of learning and all his brilliancy of rhetoric, as a man of narrow views and second-rate powers.

TENNYSON



TENNYSON

Alfred Tennyson's long life was marked by many unusual distinctions. At thirty-three he was hailed by all his countrymen as a great representative poet, and, on the death of the aged Wordsworth, the government ratified the popular decision by making him the official laureate of the nation. For fully fifty years he maintained an absolute and wonderful pre-eminence among English poets. Almost every year there was a new poem from his pen and almost every new poem added to his great reputation and amazed men by the extent and variety of his intellectual resources.

A seat in the House of Lords is the recognized English reward for supreme achievement, usually reserved for conquering generals, great statesmen or venerated judges; but to honor Tennyson precedent was broken, and for the first time a poet was made a peer.

A still more unprecedented thing in literary history is that Tennyson made a large fortune by his poetry. Scott and Dickens had done so by writing prose fiction; but never before in the world's history has any man received as much money in return for purely poetic creations. No poor penny-a-liner, he! Publishers competed for the honor of issuing new poems, and his lucky rhymes were literally "scrip and share" to him. A century ago the simple-hearted Goldsmith thought that his publisher was too generous and was doing himself an injustice when the man of business paid the poet half-a-crown a line for the *Deserted Village*; but Tennyson has sometimes received fifty times the amount that Goldsmith thought so large.

Some of Tennyson's poems have been cabled across the sea. Many of them have been translated into all the languages of Europe. There were in 1892 twenty-five partial translations of his works in German, four in Dutch, five in Danish, two in Swedish, six in French, two in Spanish, and four in Italian, and since his death many additional translations have been made.

There is also a great and growing body of exposition and comment, an array of Tennyson biographies, hand-books, and concordances. Everything indicates that he has secured a permanent place among the world's great authors.

Perhaps in attempting to give a brief analysis of Tennyson's poetry it is most natural to begin with a reference to its external form. Edgar Allan Poe, himself a consummate master of the technique of poetry, declared that Tennyson was the greatest artist that ever lived. Tennyson called himself the "heir of all the ages," and in no respect was this so true as in reference to the art of poetry. He was in a general sense, as we all are, heir to the science, the philosophy, the religion, the political liberty the world has gradually acquired; but he was heir to its poetic riches by the most personal and intense appropriation.

"Genius," says Carlyle, very truly, "is an infinite capacity for taking trouble," and Tennyson has been patient and persistent beyond all other English poets. Dante boasted that rhyme had never made him say what he did not mean, or barred the utterance of what he did desire to say. This has too rarely been the case. Butler saucily declared in reference to his own doggerel verses,

"One for sense and one for rhyme
I think sufficient at a time."

Even Byron, the Napoleon among poets, declared ruefully

“ At times

Monarchs are less imperative than rhymes.”

Browning often coins or misspells words, or borrows from foreign languages, to make the task of versification easier; but Tennyson, with exhaustive knowledge and all but infinite patience and skill, labors until his thought is fully expressed, while at the same time the beauties of language and the laws of harmony are perfectly illustrated.

That Tennyson is a master of the English language and of the laws of versification is universally admitted and needs no further illustration. That he is a great musician we all know. The question is, What has he done with his music? Has he put it to a noble use? Wordsworth says of the poets:

“ Blessings be with them and eternal praise
Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares,
The poets who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays.”

Has Tennyson fulfilled this mission of the poet? Has he taught and inspired men thus? Emphatically he has been a minister of “pure delight.” He has been a wonderful revealer of the beauty of sea and sky and landscape. Natural history in most of the early English poets was largely bookish and conventional. Spenser, for instance, often constructs purely imaginary landscapes, grouping together in one grove trees belonging to different soils and climates and never found in conjunction in Nature. But Tennyson does not do so, but to use Wordsworth’s phrase writes “with his eye on the object,” and all the mild and

varied beauties of England's rivers and meadows, woods and hills, and all the types of her architecture, from the humblest cottage to the stateliest castle or cathedral, are reproduced in Tennyson's pages.

Yet although there is much description in Tennyson, he is not primarily a descriptive poet, and never allows description to overpower the poet's more important and appropriate work of narration.

In Tennyson Nature is always an adjunct to man, and his descriptions are never either tiresome or useless. They are not, as in many poets and novelists, pretty little bits of ornamentation thrown in here and there to give variety; they grow out of the circumstance of his characters in the story, and are as necessary to them as the solid earth and the blue sky are to actual men and women. In a word Tennyson is a truthful writer. His work is conscientious through and through. He has no sympathy or affiliation with Poe or Swinburne or any "wild poet who works without a conscience or an aim."

It was very natural that one in whom truth was ingrained even in regard to the most trifling external appearances of Nature, should have been eager to learn the truth concerning all her deeper processes, to understand the secrets of her mighty laboratory and know the ultimate purpose of the great and majestic system of which we are a part. Tennyson has availed himself of every modern help for the better understanding of Nature, and has found in Science material for poetry. He has been a close and careful student of Botany, Geology, Astronomy, and has had and will have a very great influence in making the teachings of these sciences the common beliefs of men. In In Memoriam he speaks thus;

"Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems
So careless of the single life.

So careful of the type? But no.
From scarped cliff and quarried stone,
She cries 'a thousand types are gone,
I care for nothing, all shall go.'"

Technical works on Geology are read by few scholars, but *In Memoriam* has been read by almost every educated man of our generation. Such a passage as the one just quoted condenses the testimony of the rocks and makes it musical and easily remembered, and it is only when truth is associated with beauty and emotion that it finds full access to the heart.

Even in so small a matter as the description of a sunset Tennyson sometimes prefers the precision of scientific to the inaccuracy of popular speech,—as, for instance, when he speaks of night, as,

"The gloom
That follows on the turning of the world."

The most influential and noteworthy book of the 19th century is Darwin's *Origin of Species by Natural Selection*, published in 1859. Though Tennyson was then fifty years old his mind was still open and his later poetry is full of references to Darwin's great generalization. He tells us to

"Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die."

So thorough indeed was Tennyson's acceptance of Darwin's theories that he may be called the distinctive

poet of Evolution; yet his scientific opinions did not disturb but strengthened his faith in the wisdom and goodness of God.

Tennyson was the son of a clergyman and had a devotedly pious mother, and had often listened as he tells us

“to vows

For me outpour'd in holiest prayer.”

His works are saturated with Biblical allusions, as many as three hundred having been enumerated by one commentator. He indignantly repudiates atheism and materialism.

“We are not cunning casts in clay:
Let Science prove we are, and then
What matters Science unto men,
At least to me? I would not stay.”

He recognizes everywhere personal responsibility and teaches emphatically the duty and benefits of prayer.

“Pray for my soul,” says the dying Arthur,

“More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day;
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they left not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?”

And again in Enoch Arden, that true and touching story of a brave, God-fearing man, he says of Enoch in his lonely isle:

“Had not his poor heart
Spoken with That which, being everywhere,
Lets none who speak with Him seem all alone,
Surely the man had died of solitude,”

One might almost say that it was Tennyson's special aim and mission to be the mediator between the views of the parsonage in which he was educated and the world of philosophy and science in which he became so ardent an inquirer. He has certainly done much to break down the narrowness and dogmatism of the creed-makers, and he evidently thinks that some formulas still need revision, for he says,

"There lives more faith in honest doubt
Believe me than in half the creeds."

And yet while he welcomes all the developments of truth and teaches men to remodel their old opinions in the light of new knowledge, he is not a destructive critic or iconoclastic agitator. His attitude is expressed by the words:

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster."

His final legacy to the world, the volume published three weeks after his departure from it, contains a noble poem called Akbar's Dream. Akbar was an enlightened Hindoo sovereign who made great efforts to promote harmony among his Brahmin, his Mohammedan and his Christian subjects; of him Tennyson says:

"I dream'd

That stone by stone I rear'd a sacred fane,
A temple neither Pagod, Mosque nor Church,
But loftier, simpler, always open-door'd
To every breath from heaven; and Truth and Peace
And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein."

We are in danger in this age of laying entirely too much stress upon education and forgetting that what is desirable is not so much to draw out the power that is already in a man as to increase that power by a reverent reception of knowledge from without us. We hurry and bustle and cram and formulate and recite, and sometimes quite forget to wait and listen for the voices of God and Nature. Wordsworth said:

“Think you amid the mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking.
The eye, it cannot choose but see;
We cannot bid the ear be still,
Our bodies feel where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.”

“What hast thou that thou hast not received?” said Paul. Emerson's whole philosophy is that a man is great according as he permits the Divine Oversoul to flow into him and direct him. It is even written upon his tombstone,

“The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned.”

In every age it has been believed that the supreme teachers of men did not derive their knowledge from the slow and feeble processes of reason, but by divine inspiration and direct vision of truth. Tennyson was a mystic of this sort. God was to Tennyson “closer

than breathing and nearer than hands and feet." He had visions of the night and of the day. He is really speaking of himself, as we learn from his letters, when he says of King Arthur's visions:

"Many a time they come
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeballs is not light,
But vision — Yea, his very hand and foot
Are vision,
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision,
Nor the high God a vision."

Tennyson has rebuked alike the extremists who resist all progress in thought, and the extremists who would banish prayer, banish faith, banish soul, banish God from the world and take "a dial for their deity." Many books have been written during the last thirty years with the express object of reconciling Science and Religion. Many of them have doubtless been of great value, but I venture to express the opinion that Tennyson in this field of thought is the most representative man of his century, and that he has done more than any other to blend the old and the new things of the spirit and to bring his own and future generations safely through a dangerous crisis in the moral and religious life of the English-speaking world.

It has often been the case that religious teachers have been so much concerned with the future life that they have cared little for the present one. They have desired so much to prepare men for the celestial city that they have not cared much for their earthly condition or progress. But Tennyson believed in a Kingdom of God upon earth. God is creating a great race and working out a great destiny for it

here. Sometimes this thought is emblematically expressed, as in the description of the decorations of the great hall Merlin, made for Arthur in which were four great zones of sculpture:

“ And in the lowest beasts were slaying men
And in the second men were playing beasts,
And in the third were warriors, perfect men,
And in the fourth were men with growing wings.”

In the later Locksley Hall, he has this vision of the future:

“ All diseases quench’d by Science, no man halt or deaf or blind,
Stronger ever born of weaker, lustier body larger mind,
Every tiger madness muzzled, every serpent passion kill’d,
Every grim ravine, a garden, every blazing desert till’d,
Robed in universal harvest up to either pole she smiles,
Universal ocean softly washing all her warless isles.
Earth at last a warless world, a single race, a single tongue,
I have seen her far away — for is not Earth as yet so young? ”

And in a vision like one of the apostle Paul’s in grandeur, Tennyson sees that God presides over all changes and overrules everything to one great end:

“ That God who ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves.”

It is surely a matter for great joy and gratitude that the pre-eminent English poet of the 19th century should have strengthened men’s faith and hope: and it is not less a reason for congratulation that he is a

most wholesome moral teacher. Tennyson has no villainous heroes and never exalts lawless love. The whole substance of his teaching on the relations of the sexes is contained in the vows that Arthur required of those who became Knights of the Table Round. They swore:

“To reverence their conscience as their King,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds
Until they won her; for indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thoughts and amiable words
And courtliness and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.”

There is nothing sensual and there is nothing patronizing about Tennyson's treatment of women. “Women is not undeveloped man but diverse.” Either sex alone is half itself, and in true marriage lies “nor equal nor unequal.” True woman sets herself to true man “like perfect music unto noble words.” Tennyson's own mother was his model woman, and made the whole sex seem dear and noble to him. He says of her that she was one

“Not learned save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
No angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men,
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce

Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved
And girdled her with music. Happy he
With such a mother! Faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him."

"Indeed," said Tennyson, "she was the beautifullest thing that God Almighty ever made." The poet was equally blest and happy in his wife,

"With whom for forty years his life in golden sequence
ran,
She with all the charm of woman, he with all the
breadth of man."

She "strong in will and rich in wisdom" was content to devote herself to her husband and children, and to let all the perfume and beauty of her life reach the world only indirectly through them; yet surely these women, like the mother of Jesus and the mother of Wesley, will forever be honored by the world they have incalculably blest.

Tennyson was not less sensitive to physical than to moral beauty. What a company of fair women there is in his pages, "lily maids" and "imperial-moulded" queens, women

"Fairer than Rachel by the palmy well,
Fairer than Ruth among the fields of corn,
Fair as the Angel that said 'Hail!'"

Tennyson's relations with his own sex were as ideal and noble as with the other. He was a good son and a brother and a perfect friend. In Memoriam is not only the great religious poem of the century, but the noblest tribute to friendship that our language or any language possesses.

It remains to speak of Tennyson very briefly as a political thinker and social reformer. In regard to government, Tennyson is thoroughly, perhaps it may be said narrowly, English. In early life, indeed, like many other poets he had a warm sympathy with forcible revolution, and while travelling in Spain with Hallam he risked his liberty and life by carrying letters and money to aid the Spanish rebels in their revolt. This, however, was a very brief episode. Tennyson was a poet and idealist, not fitted by temperament for the rough practical work of the soldier or the conspirator. His Kingdom was essentially one of ideas and not of force. In later life he distrusted and disliked violent methods, and stigmatized the French Revolution as a "red fool fury." He did not like the French way of changing rapidly from extreme to extreme, from monarchy to republic, and from republic to empire in quick succession. In contrast to the fitful efforts and frequent relapses of the French, he loved to think of the steady resistless progress of English liberty. England was to him

"A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom slowly broadens down
From precedent to precedent."

Yet if Tennyson ceased to be a revolutionist, he remained a very ardent friend and helper of liberty. His pen was far mightier than his sword could have been, or to substitute the less familiar language of Channing, "his books have had a greater effect than artillery or legislation." And this leads me naturally to say that Tennyson has carried the strength and

earnestness of his life into the discharge of his duties as poet laureate.

The laureateship is an office that has not always been highly esteemed. After it had been held by mediocre versifiers like Tate, Rowe, Cibber, Pye, it is not surprising that Sir Walter Scott declined it in dextrous phrases which thinly veiled his contempt. There is a salary of 200 pounds a year and the additional perquisite of a cask of wine attached to the laureateship. Before Tennyson restored its dignity some wit pretty fairly expressed the public estimate of the office in the doggerel verses:

“Who would not be a laureate bold
With his butt of sherry to make him merry
And nothing to do but pocket his gold!”

But Tennyson proved the wits wrong. He did something and did not pocket the gold. For the last forty years of his life he distributed the full amount of his official salary to his less successful brothers of the pen, or to their orphan and necessitous children. And of his official writing as laureate, it is enough to say that it is none of it perfunctory and empty compliment, but all instinct with noble poetry and patriotism. A nation can well afford to have a laureate poet, if she can get one who can write such poems as *The Charge of the Light Brigade* or the *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington*, or in his official dedication of his work to his sovereign will give her such admonitions as these:

“May children of our children say
She wrought her people lasting good—

* * *

And statesmen at her council met
Who knew the seasons when to take
Occasion by the hand and make
The bounds of freedom wider yet."

The book *In Darkest England and the Way Out* is an appalling exhibition of the evils that fester beneath the brilliant surface of modern civilization. Tennyson's *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After* has condensed the great book of General Booth into a few terrible couplets. The poet sternly asks:

"Is it well that while we range with science, glorying
in the Time,
City children soak and blacken soul and sense in city
slime?"

Tennyson has no idealistic and revolutionary remedies, but frequently exhorts the rich to be mindful of their duty to the poor. His ideal squire was one who

"Strove to help his homelier brother men,
Served the poor and built the cottage, rais'd the
school and drained the fen."

But the limits of a lecture forbid me to follow his work in further detail. Let me conclude with a few general words.

Tennyson has manifested every quality of a great poet. God had tempered him very happily. He had more than feminine sensibility, more than masculine strength. His faculties were in perfect equipoise. The creative impulse and the critical judgment were in right proportion, and insured a success that neither alone could have given. Where the impulse to create is strong and that to criticise is weak, the result is necessarily a product at once too large and too crude,

and the poet's fate is that of a Blackmore or a Southey. Where the critical faculty is abnormally developed, it quenches enthusiasm and makes the mind shrink from a great task, for the labor is seen to be inevitable and the result doubtful. But in Tennyson courage and judgment were alike remarkable. He never checked his inspiration, but never failed to guide it; thus he has given us the whole possible result of his great natural endowments. Cowardice did not deter him from attempting, or indolence from perfecting, any work which his imagination held before him as a possibility. And so in the domain of art he has left us one of the few ideal lives, a life in which the maximum of human power is closely approached. Engineers calculate the power of their furnaces, and are able to tell very nearly what work their great engines will perform. But the percentage of loss in that most skillfully made of all machines, man himself, is sadly in excess of what he permits in an instrument which his own hands have fashioned. Not so in Tennyson's case. We feel that he was one of the instruments of the Master Workman that did substantially the work for which it was designed. He was a great human harp, and every chord in him responded to the hand of God. Not a sense, not a faculty was undeveloped or unused. Not a source of knowledge or inspiration was neglected. He was conversant alike with Nature, with men and with books. He observed everything, he pondered everything, and at last when he had sufficiently fused his acquisitions in his mind, as in some great crucible, he gave them forth again to the world in a new and wonderful combination.

No one can take the measure of Tennyson by reading a few of his poems. His greatness is as much in

the mass as in the perfection of his work; when both are considered, he stands before us as one of the greatest figures in modern literature. How strong and far-reaching his influence has already been! He is not the poet of a coterie, but of all men who speak the English tongue. He is part of the education of every scholar, and some of his words of faith and hope have been uttered in almost every pulpit where English is spoken, and have been a new gospel to a perplexed generation.

Truly a great orb set in our sky but its light arose on some other sphere. This was Tennyson's own faith, and he expressed it in a noble figure borrowed from the sea which he so passionately loved.

"Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea!

* * *

Twilight and evening bell
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.

For though from out our bourne of Time and
Place

The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar."

ROBERT BROWNING.

ROBERT BROWNING

Of late years everybody has heard a good deal about Robert Browning. In 1881 the very unusual compliment was paid him of establishing in London a society bearing his name and devoted exclusively to the study of his works. The honor was the greater because of the number and eminence of the founders of the society. Since then Browning societies have been established in every continent, and for a while it seemed as though they were soon to be found in every village.

I remember seeing a cartoon in Puck sometime since, representing a ship at anchor off the coast of Africa and two traders on the shore in conversation with the native chiefs. One of the chiefs speaks as follows: "What have you in your ship? We don't want any of your beads and looking-glasses, we've got past all that kind of thing. If you have any tennis rackets bring them ashore and let us look at them, and be quick about it for our Browning club meets at 3 o'clock."

Browning has not only got into clubs (and into the comic papers), but he has taken his place on the shelves of every public or college library that aspires to any sort of completeness. Not only are his own numerous volumes on the shelves but beside them are the ever-increasing multitude of Browning biographies, Browning handbooks, introductions to Browning, and Browning encyclopædias.

Browning has certainly at last succeeded in arresting public attention, though he was unremunerated

and neglected for a longer period than any other author in our history who has written anything like as much or as well. Pauline was published when he was twenty years old; Paracelsus when he was twenty-three; Sordello at twenty-eight; the remarkable collection of dramas, romances, and lyrics known collectively as Bells and Pomegranates before the author was thirty-four; and yet for the last six months of the year 1860, when the author was forty-eight, not a copy of his works was sold, and at no time previous had the sale been large.

It is natural to ask the questions, why this long neglect of his works and why a final recognition of their value. I suppose the common answer to the first question would be, "The works were neglected because they are hard to understand. They are full of queer words, odd rhymes, elliptical constructions, grammatical inversions, and the most abrupt and unexpected transitions in thought." The apologist for the public would perhaps further say: "The works too are unlike any other poetry. They have not the beauty, the melody, the intensity of feeling we expect in poetry. They are too exclusively argumentative and metaphysical."

I acknowledge the force and reasonableness of many of these assertions. Indeed on other occasions I have made them myself with an emphasis that has made Browning devotees regard me as very narrow and prejudiced. It will be my pleasanter task now to try to exhibit some of the elements of value in Browning rather than his faults.

Who can fail to sympathize with Douglas Jerrold when, slowly convalescing from a serious illness, he found among some new books sent him by a friend, a

copy of *Sordello*. Thomas Powell, writing in 1849 has chronicled the episode. "A few lines," he says, "put Jerrold in a state of alarm." Sentence after sentence brought no consecutive thought to his brain. At last the idea occurred to him that his mental faculties had been wrecked. The perspiration rolled from his forehead, and smiting his head he sank back on the sofa, crying, "O God, I am an idiot!" A little later, adds Powell, when Jerrold's wife and sister entered, he thrust *Sordello* into their hands, demanding what they thought of it. He watched them intently while they read. When at last Mrs. Jerrold remarked, "I don't understand what this man means, it is gibberish," her delighted husband gave a sigh of relief and exclaimed, "Thank God, I am not an idiot!" Many friends of Browning will remember his recounting this incident almost in these very words, and his enjoyment therein: though he would never admit justification for such puzzlement.

But more illustrious personages than Douglas Jerrold were puzzled by the poem. Lord Tennyson manfully tackled it, but he is reported to have admitted in bitterness of spirit: "There were only two lines in it that I understood, and they were both lies; they were the opening and closing lines, 'Who will may hear *Sordello's* story told,' and 'Who would has heard *Sordello's* story told!'" Carlyle was equally candid: "My wife," he writes, "has read through *Sordello* without being able to make out whether *Sordello* was a man, or a city, or a book." In an article on this poem, in a French magazine, M. Barot quotes a passage where the poet says, "God gave man two faculties"—and adds, "I wish while he was about it (*pendant pu'il etait en train*) God had supplied an-

other, namely, the power of understanding Mr. Browning."

It is told of Gilead P. Beck, that after reading *Fine* at the Fair frightful symptoms set in, till in despair he took up *Red Cotton Nightcap Country*, and fell for hours into a dull comatose misery. "His eyes were bloodshot, his hair was pushed in disorder about his head, his cheeks were flushed, his hands were trembling, the nerves in his face were twitching,—then he rose, and solemnly cursed Robert Browning. And then he took all his volumes, and disposing them carefully in the fireplace, set light to them. 'I wish,' he said, 'that I could put the poet there too.'"

One other anecdote of the kind was often, with evident humorous appreciation, recounted by the poet. On his introduction to the Chinese Ambassador, as a "brother-poet," he asked that dignitary what kind of poetic expression he particularly affected. The great man deliberated, and then replied that his poetry might be defined as "enigmatic." Browning at once admitted the fraternal kinship. Yet there are not a few people who feel a great debt of gratitude to Robert Browning. He has filled life with new interest and brightened the future with new hope for them. There are some intelligent people who read and admire him more than any other 19th century author.

Tennyson treats much of civilization and the collective life of men, but Browning fixes his attention chiefly on the individual heart and conscience. There is to him little except the development of the single soul. He teaches men and women to live out their own lives in entire disregard of rank or fashion or worldly gain or public opinion. In a word he says in many ways, Lose your lives in order to save them. Above all things,

no other consideration but spiritual affinity and affection should ever unite people in marriage, and where spiritual affinity and affection exist the man and woman should not allow anything to keep them apart.

This is the meaning of the remarkable poem called *The Flight of the Duchess*. The story in brief is this: A young duke possessed of immense estates and the loftiest pride of rank has married a cheerful active young girl who finds the stiff etiquette of the castle unendurable and so runs away, with a tribe of gypsies, abandoning loveless wealth and station for a life of poverty and hardship made glad by human sympathy. She is filled with new life and hope, told that "love is the only good in the world," and assured that in the gypsy camp she shall find love to her heart's content, and so, according to Browning, the lady's elopement was wise and right.

I will illustrate by another example, *Youth and Art*. A penniless young sculptor lives in an attic on one side of the street. A penniless young girl who is studying singing lives in an attic on the other. They are attracted to each other, but each is anxious to get on in the world, and so, as they think of each other's poverty, they suppress any manifestation of regard for prudential reasons. They separate and each gains wealth and social position, but each fails to gain true distinction as an artist or true happiness as a human being. They admit their mistake in the words:

"Each life's unfulfilled you see;
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy;
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,
Starved, feasted, despaired,—been happy."

But now perhaps one asks about Browning himself? Did this daring prophet practice what he preached? Was he such a lover as he pictures, one whom no obstacle can daunt, whom no consideration of prudence can turn aside? Let me briefly narrate the story of his marriage and the reader can judge.

A series of Browning's early poems was called *Bells and Pomegranates*, a beautiful and poetic title which the poet himself explains as meaning "a mixture of music with discoursing, sound with sense, poetry with thought." The recollection is necessary to understand the meaning of the compliment to Browning which appeared in Elizabeth Barrett's poem, *Lady Geraldine's Courtship*. In it, after praising Wordsworth's solemn-thoughted idyl and Tennyson's enchanted reverie, she speaks of Browning's *Pomegranates*, "which if cut deep down the middle,

"Show a heart within blood-tinctured,
Of a veined humanity."

Browning admired the poem and was doubtless gratified by the personal compliment. He begged an introduction, but Miss Barrett was a confirmed invalid and admitted no one to her sickroom. When a girl of fourteen she overbalanced herself in the effort to place a saddle on the back of her pony. She fell backward and seriously injured her spine. Some years later she broke a blood vessel and was ordered to a milder climate. Accordingly, accompanied by her brother and some friends, she resided for a time at Torquay on the south coast of England. There she suffered a great shock in seeing her brother and two of his friends drowned through some accident to their

sailboat. The tragedy nearly killed her. As soon as she recovered sufficiently to be moved, she returned to her home in London and there lived in the strictest seclusion, regarded by herself and her family as a hopeless invalid. Her mind was active. She read miscellaneously, she wrote prose and poetry; but she was confined to a darkened room and divided her time between her bed and her couch. It was to this woman that Robert Browning impulsively offered his hand and heart. The offer was persistently repeated until persistence at last won an almost reluctant assent. Miss Barrett was too high-minded to take advantage of her suitor's chivalry and recklessness. Browning was at this time thirty-four years old, strong, handsome, intellectually gifted, and seemed ready to enter upon a career of conquest, and Miss Barrett felt herself weak and helpless, unfit to be a true wife, a co-worker, a burden sharer.

To her sense of his devotion we owe the most beautiful and pathetic series of love poems ever addressed by a woman to a man. Her modesty leads her to entitle the forty-four poems in which she expresses her emotions *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, but they have no original except in her own heart and brain. In the third sonnet she writes:

"Unlike are we, unlike, O princely Heart!
Unlike our uses and our destinies.
Our ministering two angels look surprise
On one another, as they strike athwart
Their wings in passing. Thou, bethink thee, art
A guest for queens to social pageantries,
With gages from a hundred brighter eyes
Than tears even can make mine, to ply thy part
Of chief musician. What hast thou to do

With looking from the lattice-lights at me,
A poor, tired, wandering singer?—singing through
The dark, and leaning up a cypress tree?
The chrism is on thine head, on mine, the dew,—
And Death must dig the level where these agree.”

The eighth runs thus:

“What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver, who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal,
In unexpected largesse? Am I cold,
Ungrateful, that for these most manifold
High gifts I render nothing back at all?
Not so; not cold,—but very poor instead!
Ask God who knows, for frequent tears have run
The colours from my life, and left so dead
And pale a stuff, it were not fitly done
To give the same as pillow to thy head.
Go farther! Let it serve to trample on.”

The figure in the fifth sonnet is still stronger, still more pathetic in its expression of the disparity between her and her suitor.

“I lift my heavy heart up solemnly,
As once Electra her sepulchral urn,
And, looking in thine eyes, I overturn
The ashes at thy feet. Behold and see
What a great heap of grief lay hid in me,
And how the red wild sparkles dimly burn
Through the ashen greyness. If thy foot in scorn
Could tread them out to darkness utterly,
It might be well perhaps. But if instead
Thou wait beside me for the wind to blow
The grey dust up, those laurels on thine head,

O my beloved, will not shield thee so
That none of all the fires shall scorch and shred
The hair beneath. Stand farther off then! Go."

All know the happy sequel. Marriage awoke Miss Barrett to new life and vigor. The kiss of her husband was like the kiss of the prince in the fairy tale that broke the spell of evil and gave back the sleeping beauty to life and happiness. In a letter to a friend shortly after marriage Mrs. Browning writes, "He drew me back to life and hope again when I had done with both.—Temper, spirit, manner—there is not a flaw anywhere. I shut my eyes sometimes and fancy it all a dream of my guardian angel." "I am not improved but transformed."—Two years later a letter of Mrs. Browning's contains these words: "My husband was laid up for nearly a month with fever. Quite unhappy I have been over those burning hands and languid eyes—the only unhappiness I ever had from him." And speaking of another occasion on which she had carelessly caused the loss of a sum of money she says: "Any other man, a little lower than the angels, would have stamped and sworn a little for the mere relief of the thing—but as to his being angry with *me* for any cause except not eating enough dinner, the sun would turn the wrong way first." It is, moreover, recorded that during the fifteen years of his married life Robert Browning, except on one occasion, always dined at home.

Browning was one of the best husbands that ever lived. In this poem called *By the Fireside* he speaks of the proposal by which he won his wife as the really great and important event of his life. He says:

" I am named and known by that moment's feat:
 There took my station and degree;
 So grew my own small life complete,
 As Nature obtained her best of me,—
 One born to love you, sweet!"

Browning wanted his wife to be his guide, philosopher and friend not only in this life but in the world to come. He says:

" When earth breaks up and heaven expands,
 How will the change strike me and you
 In the house not made with hands?
 O, I must feel your brain prompt mine,
 Your heart anticipate my heart,
 You must be just before in fine,
 See and make me see, for your part,
 New depths in the divine!"

The poem *One Word More* has a peculiar autobiographical interest. He is dedicating a volume of love poems to his wife and he does so by saying:

" No artist lives and loves who longs not
 Once and only once and for one only
 To find his love a language
 Fit and fair and simple and sufficient.
 Once and only once and for one only,
 So to be the man and leave the artist."

I quote but one more love poem, and I select it not more for the intensity of its feeling than for the singular felicity of its language and the peculiar alliterative melody of its versification, "*Summum Bonum*":

" All the breath and the bloom of the year in the bag
 of one bee:
 All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the heart of
 one gem:

In the core of one pearl all the shade and the shine
of the sea:
Breath and bloom, shade and shine, wonder, wealth,
and —
How far above them —
Truth that's brighter than gem,
Trust that's purer than pearl,—
Brightest truth, purest trust in the universe — all were
for me
In the kiss of one girl."

Robert Browning has scores of other poems in which he illustrates and enforces the same general theory that spiritual affection should triumph over worldliness and cowardice.

But instead of examining any more love poems, let us turn to another field of thought. There are few finer short poems than *The Lost Leader*. The lost leader had been induced to abandon his championship of the People's cause and accept an office and a pension from the government. In contrast with *The Lost Leader* take one of Browning's types of fidelity. A *Grammarian's Funeral* tells of a man who lived at the time of the revival of learning in Europe after the long darkness of the Middle Ages. He sees that the first thing for a teacher of the people to do is to recover the lost treasure of ancient wisdom and so he gives his whole life to the preliminary drudgery of making a Greek grammar. Friends urged him to work for some immediate result. They said:

"Time escapes;
Live now or never!"

He said,

"What's time! Leave now for dogs and apes!
Man has Forever,"

So he worked on till his eyes grew dim and his frame weak with rage and infirmity. Consumption attacked him. "Death's throttling hands" were at his throat; yet

"While he could stammer
Ground he at grammar,
Properly based on
When dead from the waist down."

and though he died before his grammar was completed, yet Browning thinks his life was a great success.

"Was it not great? Did he not throw on God,
(He loves the burden)
God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen?"

The Patriot is another expression of the same thought, that men must live not for things seen and temporal but for things unseen and eternal. The poem tells how the mob put to death one who a year before had been its idol. The poet's conception is that the man has remained the same high-minded patriot as before, but the fickle multitude has changed.

But no mistake could be greater than to suppose that Browning's temper and teaching are ascetic. His view of the present world is very cheerful. One of his heroines sings:

"The year's at the spring;
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hillside's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in his heaven —
All's right with the world!"

Browning thinks that the goodness of God and the value of life are revealed to all men who do their duty and walk by the light that God gives them. Fra Lippo Lippi is a monk who has a genius for painting. The prior and the monks all want him to paint conventional figures of saints and angels, to incite people to devotion by showing the joys of heaven and the horrors of hell; but the artist has no interest in their ideals. He is fascinated by the real world about him. He says:

“This world’s no blot for us,
Nor blank; it means intensely, and means good;
To find its meaning is my meat and drink.”

The world is beautiful and

“If you get simple beauty and naught else
You get about the best thing God invents.”

To take another illustration from a kindred art: Abt Vogler is a musician who as he sits at his organ one day and extemporizes beautiful harmonies regrets that they die so soon and are so completely lost. Suddenly he has an intuition that his music has gone up to God and is by him preserved, and that so it shall be with everything good and beautiful, and that only sin and sorrow and failure are lost, but that all virtue and aspiration and faithful endeavor are chords in the great harmony of the universe and parts of its perfect and eternal music. God is the great Master of harmony and reveals his plan to the heart of every true co-worker, however humble, so the comforted musician sings:

“Sorrow is hard to bear and doubt is slow to clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and
woe;

But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;
The rest may reason and welcome; 'tis we musicians know."

Browning's poems upon religion are numerous and offer an exceedingly fascinating field of study; but there is no opportunity to discuss them here. I will only say in general that Browning teaches that men should live very earnest lives, trying very hard to do the appointed task; yet he is continually enforcing the lesson that we ought to aim at something beyond our power of accomplishment.

"A man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?"

And even in earthly concerns it is only by attempting a greater work than we can accomplish that we do all that we can. Every man falls short of his mark, but the higher the mark, the higher the achievement. Browning illustrates his idea by a fine figure borrowed from the story of the tower of Babel whose top was by its builders intended to reach to heaven. Of course they failed in so ambitious an attempt; but nevertheless the result of their endeavors was the erection of the city of Babylon, the earliest great city and the wonder of the most ancient world. The poet's words are:

"All great works spring from the ruins of greater projects;
Men block out Babels to build Babylons."

Yet Browning is very hopeful even for those who seem to fail the most completely and sadly in life. He has a poem with the title, *Apparent Failure*. He muses

on the life of three suicides whose bodies he saw in the morgue in Paris. Disappointed ambitions and lawless lusts have blasted their lives, and the unhappy men have violently ended their earthly existence. Yet to Browning their failure is not absolute and permanent, but only temporary and apparent, for he ends by saying:

"It's wiser being good than bad;
It's safer being meek than fierce:
It's fitter being sane than mad.
My own hope is, a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth every stretched;
That, after Last, returns the First,
Though a wide compass round be fetched;
That what began best, can't end worst,
Nor what God blessed once, prove accurst."

In a poem entitled *At the 'Mermaid,'* Browning represents Shakespeare as the speaker. He cares nothing for fame as a poet, but expresses his view of life in these words:

"I find earth not grey but rosy,
Heaven not grim but fair of hue.
Do I stoop? I pluck a posy.
Do I stand and stare? All's blue.

Chief and King and Lord's anointed,
I?— who never once have wished
Death before the day appointed,
Lived and liked, not poohed and pished!

Have you found your life distasteful?
My life did, and does, smack sweet.
Was your youth of pleasure wasteful?
Mine I saved and hold complete.

Do your joys with age diminish?
When mine fail me, I'll complain.
Must in death your daylight finish?
My sun sets to rise again."

It was said of Oliver Cromwell that "he was a strong man amid the dark perils of war, and that hope shone in him like a pillar of fire, when it had gone out in other men." So Browning from the cradle to the grave was full of hope and energy. His last recorded words are, "How gratifying!" and his best biography is his own line,

"I am full of an intensest life."

Next to Shakespeare he is the most many-sided of our poets, yet quite unlike Shakespeare in that he is not truly dramatic. Shakespeare writes almost impersonally. You cannot say of Lear, or Macbeth, or Othello, or even of Hamlet, that Shakespeare is speaking his own sentiments through the mouth of another. Shakespeare's characters are radically unlike one another. Browning's are not. No matter what the character or what the situation, you see familiar features and hear a familiar accent. Every character seems like Browning in a new mask. The world is ransacked for subjects; but Browning always goes with you to point out what you are to see. Yet if he does not show true dramatic power, he at any rate manifests the most extraordinary range of knowledge and of sympathy.

He never wrote merely to amuse men. He did not condescend to write books that should be a mere substitute for a cigar, or a game of cards, or a bit of fancy work, as a means of passing a leisure hour. He meant seriously to teach men great truths. He

aspired to be a seer and a prophet. These are his words:

“ I declare our Poet him
Whose insight makes all others dim.”

If he has measurably succeeded in this aim, if he has really reaffirmed the great old truths and revealed some new ones, it is well not to be too much troubled about the imperfections in the form of the communication. We must exercise the same charity toward the poet as toward the preacher about whom Browning has this to say:

“ It were to be wished the flaws were fewer

* * *

In the earthen vessel, holding treasure:
But the main thing is, Does it hold good measure? ”

RUSKIN,

RUSKIN

Ruskin lived a life of extraordinary purity, self-sacrifice and industry. He inherited a large fortune, of which he gave away much the larger part in establishing museums, art-galleries, libraries, in building dwelling houses for the poor, and in aiding young men and women to get an education.

In addition to these exalted moral qualities he possessed artistic gifts of a very high order, a vivid sense of beauty in form and color, intense human sympathies, and marvelous powers of expression. His books, more than forty in number, are all highly poetic in conception, though only one of them has the metrical form that technically constitutes it poetry. But so poetical is his prose, so instinct with poetry are his thoughts and feelings, that in spite of the small amount and inferior quality of his technical versification, he was Gladstone's reputed choice for the office of poet laureate as Tennyson's successor. Tennyson described the poet as dowered with "the hate of hate, the love of love, the scorn of scorn," and certainly in intensity of feeling Ruskin ranks with Burns and Byron and accords with Tennyson's ideal.

William Watson makes the most prominent of the poet's characteristics the love of beauty and the perception of it in common things. Says Watson:

"The poet gathers fruit from every tree,
Yea, grapes from thorns and figs from thistles he,
Plucked by his hand the meanest flower that blows
Towers to the lily, reddens to the rose."

To this ideal Ruskin also accords. He has seen, described and analyzed the beauties of rocks, flowers, trees, and clouds as no one else has ever done, but in spite of his great poetic endowments Ruskin has shrunk from the restraints of verse and preferred prose as the vehicle of his thought and passion.

As an art critic his influence has been very great. His views have been substantially accepted and numerous disciples are everywhere popularizing them. As an economist he has had to deal with questions of much greater inherent difficulty and there is as yet little visible and definite result from his labors. It is one thing to teach people to recognize true perspective and graceful curves, and quite another to teach them to be unselfish and high-minded. He wants to change the manufactures, trades and governments of the world so as to abolish ignorance, poverty, vice and wretchedness and enable all men and women to have the necessities and the most important luxuries of life, and to be cultured, virtuous and happy. I think his ideal is a true and noble one, and moreover entirely practicable; we are working toward it, if not rapidly, at least steadily. The point at which I find myself compelled to differ from Mr. Ruskin is that he looks with distrust and aversion upon machinery. He would destroy railways because they spoil the scenery, and shut up factories and revert to hand-labor because hand-labor is more varied and healthful. I think to check the progress of labor-saving inventions is both impossible and undesirable, and that what we ought to do is not to abolish these new instruments of power but to learn to use them more wisely, so as to diminish their incidental evils and develop further their great possibilities of service. Let us have more machinery

so that the world may be delivered from incessant and slavish toil and have leisure for the culture of mind and heart.

Ruskin has greatly influenced the spirit of society. He has stimulated men to live more earnest, industrious, pure, and self-sacrificing lives; but he has not materially altered the industrial system.

He advocates co-operation instead of competition and seems to wish to establish socialism by the power of the government, although experience shows that enforced socialism is a kind of slavery. Voluntary socialism is the only kind worthy of the name, and the real problem of the philanthropist is to educate and ennoble the individual members of society, and then society as a whole will easily rise to a higher plane of living.

Then again Ruskin is querulous and despondent. He does not show us visions of progress and inspire us with hope, but nullifies human achievement in the past and sees little to approve in the present. He would have been much more influential if he had scolded less and encouraged more, if he had glorified human heroism and accomplishment more and lamented less over the work that yet remains undone.

Erroneous theories and a despondent temper are, I think, the chief reasons for the comparative ineffectiveness of Ruskin's economic teachings. But another and by no means an unimportant additional reason is the rhetorical form in which he has presented his opinions. Though his language is more rich, beautiful, rhythmic and impassioned than that of any other writer on economics, or any other writer whatever except De Quincey, it embodies very little precise and scientific teaching. He does not examine all sides of the sub-

ject. He does not state fairly the views of opponents. He does not answer objections, or show how his theories might be carried into effect. He exaggerates, he is inconsistent, he is diffuse. Very many single passages in his economic writings may be read with the greatest admiration and pleasure; but these feelings seldom extend, at least in my case, to the whole production. In *Sesame and Lilies* and the lectures of that class I have a feeling of unsoundness, of disproportion, of garrulity. The writer does not seem to be master of his subject and of himself. I read him feverishly and distrustfully and not with the unalloyed pleasure and absolute confidence with which I read a work of Bacon, or Milton, or Tennyson, or George Eliot, feeling always in case of these latter the maturity and consistency of the opinions, the propriety of their sequence, and the calm majesty of their expression.

But whatever may be Ruskin's defects in knowledge, in power of thought and temper, the purity and loftiness of his soul, the splendor of his imagination, the fervor of his emotions, and the profuse and striking beauties of his rhetoric make him one of the most remarkable and most lovable of the many great men of the nineteenth century.

JAMES MARTINEAU



JAMES MARTINEAU

As a tree strikes its roots deep into the soil and its leaves draw their sustenance from hidden roots, so the character of a man is largely determined by his family history. It will therefore help us to understand James Martineau, if we glance for a moment at the country from which his ancestors came and consider the reasons for their emigration.

Louis the Fourteenth, the so-called "grand monarch," the despot who, by his executive abilities and the unparalleled magnificence of his court, had reduced France to such absolute subjection that he could say without hearing a protest, "I am the state," in the year 1684 contracted a momentous marriage with the former governess of his children, Madame de Maintenon. This lady was a most devoted Catholic and at the suggestion of her father confessor urged the all-powerful King to take measures for the conversion of his Protestant subjects to the orthodox faith. "It is the curse of Kings," said Shakespeare, "to be surrounded by slaves who take their humors for a warrant to break into the sacred house of life." It was the King's wish that the Protestants should be converted to Catholicism. The method of accomplishing this missionary enterprise was left to his officers. Zealous bishops and fanatical priests attended by companies of dragoons descended upon every Protestant community, and by dreadful threats and barbarous acts of violence converted the timid and helpless at the rate of three or four hundred a day. At length the King was told that his commands had been obeyed,

that all the Protestants had been converted, that there were no heretics left in all his Majesty's dominions. The King then revoked the edict of religious toleration which had been in force for nearly a hundred years, and required all the inhabitants of France to accept the Catholic faith and attend the services of the Catholic church. Rather than do so, hundreds of thousands of Protestants, sacrificing their property and risking their liberty, fled in haste to other lands. The flight of the Huguenots from France is one of the most heroic episodes in Christian history, and worthy of comparison with the constancy of the early martyrs or the steadfastness of those pilgrims who laid the foundations of the free churches of America.

Among those who escaped was a young surgeon named Gaston Martineau. He married a countrywoman, also a religious refugee, and they settled in the city of Norwich, England. Of this line, in the fourth generation, James Martineau was born, on April 21, 1805.

His father, Thomas Martineau, was a cloth manufacturer whose chief market was the Spanish peninsula; but in 1823 a tariff treaty with France diverted the trade to that country and Thomas Martineau's business was ruined. He was compelled to call his creditors together and lay his affairs before them. On his liabilities of £100,000 they found that he could pay about three-fourths and a settlement on this basis would have secured a legal release from all further obligation. But this was not in accordance with the moral standards of Thomas Martineau. He asked for time and promised to pay the large remainder in full. He struggled with this heavy burden for the rest of his life and at his death left the obligation to

his family, and in the end, after patient endeavor and severe sacrifice, the whole amount of this debt of honor was paid.

James Martineau attended the Grammar School at Norwich from his sixth to his fourteenth year and was then for two years in a school at Bristol. He then, at sixteen years of age, began the study of engineering and for a time worked at the lathe and in the model room. But the scholastic spirit and the religious impulse in him were too strong to be resisted. After a year of mechanics, he felt that he was called to preach the gospel, and entered upon the necessary work of preparation.

At that date no one could study at Oxford or Cambridge without signing the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England; so James Martineau went to Manchester College, a small and struggling school established by dissenters. The course of study required five years for its completion, the first three of which were devoted to general studies and the last two to theology; but Hebrew was taken during the whole five years. Martineau had but ten class-mates in his earlier studies and only three in Divinity; thus he had the priceless advantage of the most intimate fellowship with his instructors.

There were but two of them, but they were both thorough scholars and men of high and inspiring character. Of one of them Dr. Martineau in later years spoke as follows: "Well do I remember the respectful wonder with which we saw, as our course advanced, vein after vein of various learning modestly opened out, . . . and the impatience with which, out of very homage to his wisdom, we almost resented his impartial love of truth in giving us the most careful

epitome of other opinions with scarce the suggestion of his own . . . Whatever might be the particular conclusions he favored, he never justified a prejudice; he never misdirected our admiration; he never hurt an innocent feeling or overbore a serious judgment; and he set up within us a standard of Christian scholarship to which it must ever exalt us to aspire." President Garfield, in famous words, said that to sit on a log with Mark Hopkins would be to attend a university. Mr. Martineau at the school at Bristol under Lant Carpenter and at Manchester College under Kenrick and Wellbeloved, had had the intimacy of three men of the type the President praised.

Martineau graduated at twenty-two and then taught for a year in Bristol in the school of his former instructor. He then accepted a call to an assistant pastorate in a long established church in Dublin, which, though still bearing the Presbyterian name, was Unitarian in its theology. The congregation was intelligent, wealthy and numerous, and beside sustaining its services of worship, the church supported an almshouse for widows, a school for boys and another for girls. Mr. A. W. Jackson, the able biographer to whom I am indebted for most of my knowledge of Martineau's life, says the young minister won both the admiration and the affection of his congregation. "The freshness of youth was upon his features; the maturity of wisdom was on his lips; the light of genius was in his eye."

"A long and prosperous ministry here we should naturally forecast for him. A difficulty, however, was in his path, which, alas! to most had been quite the opposite of a difficulty. The venerable pastor died, and Mr. Martineau came by natural succession to his place.

To his surprise he found that the change brought an addition of £100 to his salary. To this of itself we may presume he would not have objected; but the source whence it came raised scruples which tore him from his charge and gave a new direction to his career. The £100 he thus succeeded to was his share of the *Regium Donum*." According to his sensitive conscience to receive this royal bounty would make him a servant of the government, a supporter of its policy, and approver of its injustice. The money was raised by general taxation. It was extorted from Quakers, Catholics and Free Thinkers. It was in Martineau's own words, "an exaction upon reluctant consciences." He held that an alliance with the State was inimical "to the credit and influence of Christianity." It was his conviction that more unbelievers had been made by "establishments than by all the speculations which friends of establishments deem so dangerous."

Martineau, like his father, had a stubborn and unaccommodating conscience. He not only would not take the money, he would not continue as pastor of the church unless the church gave it up. He said, "I see difficulty in its abandonment; but in keeping it, I see wrong."

"Abstract right usually fares hard in its first encounter with a wrong defended by custom and advantage." Martineau had a strong hold on the people. Many acceded to his view and rallied to his support, yet after an earnest controversy, his party was defeated by one vote.

Poverty is the modern form of martyrdom. The young minister had a wife and child. He had bought a house and had a burden of debt. But he could not compromise and did not hesitate. He resigned his lucrative position to face an uncertain future.

His predecessor was an honorable man, yet he had felt no scruple about receiving the royal bounty. Hundreds of honorable men in every generation accept similar bounties from their respective governments, and why should not Martineau have done so? He was the descendant of Huguenot exiles and a man worthy of his sires. They had sacrificed fortune and abandoned their native land, had gone to a harsher climate and there among a strange people had shrunk back as it were into childhood and begun in maturity to learn the elements of an alien tongue, all that they might keep a good conscience. Was it for him, the descendant of such ancestors, to be false to their principles and to share in any manner or degree in the tyranny against which they had protested? Martineau in Ireland was fighting the battle of the Roman Catholics. Their worst disabilities had, it is true, very recently been removed by the great Emancipation Act of 1829; but Martineau protested against the discriminations that remained and against the principle of taxing men to any extent and in any manner to support a religious worship in which they took no part and which they regarded as heretical and injurious.

It is a fine example of returning good for evil, of making the persecutors flush for shame at their methods, to find this man, whose ancestors had suffered in dragonades instigated by Catholic bishops and blessed by the Pope, refusing to accept a penny of the money collected by a tax to which Catholics were unwilling contributors.

Martineau resigned without any assurance or prospect of another position; but his four years of earnest ministry in Dublin had made him favorably known to a wide circle, and in a very short time he was called to

a pastorate in Liverpool, in which he remained for twenty-five years.

Mr. Jackson gives the following description of Martineau as a preacher: "A tall, spare figure robed in the scholar's gown, and wearing the dignities of his office as a natural grace; a thin face, suggestive of the cloister and traced with deep lines of thought; a voice not loud but musical and reaching; an enunciation leisurely but not slow and perfectly distinct.

. . . The hymn is read in tones that reveal a soul that vibrates to its melody. There is reverent reading of the Scriptures, reading not obtrusive as to its emphasis, but which reveals their meaning and conveys their power. The prayer is quiet, tender, appealing, a strain of rapture and love and longing. And now, the sermon; from the beginning it is plain that it is to serious thought that you are invited. The preacher has taken the philosopher into service; the scholar's stores are brought into requisition; rhetoric contributes its strength and grace. In his manner there is calmness; gestures are few, speech is quiet. It is, however, a calmness at the surface combined with fervor at the depths. Here is a soul swayed by a holy passion; and these thoughts so severely stated are a prophet's burden. . . . Sanctities are made plain; moral depths are explored; mystic heights are gained."

In Moncure D. Conway's instructive and fascinating Autobiography there is this comparison between Emerson and Martineau at a later time when Martineau was preaching in London. "The last sermon I heard in America was from Ralph Waldo Emerson. . . . Familiar as I was with his lyceum lectures, they could not with all their charm prepare me for this

inspiration, this fountain of spiritual power, this pathos. . . . Great as Emerson was in literature, his hereditary and natural place was in the pulpit. . . . With Emerson's wonderful sermon still ringing in my ears, I went to hear James Martineau. . . . In the gloomy little chapel I waited until the man should appear whose 'Endeavors after the Christian Life' had brought me help in my early solitude. When Martineau presently ascended the pulpit, I was impressed by his noble figure, but when his face shone upon us through the gloom, when his gracious and clear voice was heard, I said, This is an Emerson not banished from his pulpit, but held fast as a Unitarian leader. . . . This minister was meeting the spiritual need and hunger of the best men and women. In his audience of three or four hundred none had come except by inward attraction."

Our blessings often come to us from remote and forgotten sources. The cool streams that fertilize the plains and give drink to the thirsty inhabitants of cities descend from distant and inaccessible mountains. In like manner the thoughts of high and solitary thinkers are brought by intermediaries and gradual processes to multitudes who never trace them to their source. James Martineau preached to small audiences and his books are not in the ordinary sense popular; yet indirectly he has influenced millions of men and women. He has had scores of disciples and interpreters who have taken the bread of life from his hands and have distributed it in fragments to the hungry multitude. I was told several years ago by an influential Methodist preacher that he had read every sermon of Martineau that had been printed, and that he constantly derived ideas and inspiration from him.

Martineau's influence is felt in every theological seminary and in every educated pulpit. It is even more pervasive. It is felt in almost every hamlet in the English-speaking world. It goes to every frontier of civilization. It finds its way to the mines and the lumber camps, it sails with the mariner to the most distant seas. For among Martineau's many learned and cultured auditors there was one man of supreme genius. An open-eyed, warm-hearted, all-seeing, all-feeling, all-remembering, all-recording novelist was his attentive hearer, Charles Dickens, the most widely-read of all authors, the tenderest of humanitarians, the most effective of reformers, who transformed into unfading pictures and immortal narratives many of the great preacher's ideals of life and duty.

But Martineau's great energies were not exhausted by his pulpit labors. While still continuing to preach, he was, at the age of thirty-five, appointed to the chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy in Manchester College, and entered with enthusiasm into this supremely important and difficult field of labor. He began his career as a teacher of philosophy with large plans and high hopes, and his remarkable vitality and steadfastness of purpose sustained him in his profound researches through forty-five laborious years. It was not till he was a white-haired patriarch of fourscore that he resigned the chair of Philosophy in which he had instructed and inspired many successive classes of students, among them such disciples as R. A. Armstrong, J. Estlin Carpenter and Philip H. Wicksteed, the later pillars of English Unitarianism.

During all these years his pen had been busy; the results of his researches had appeared in various philosophical and scientific journals; from time to time lead-

ing universities had awarded him academic honors in recognition of his eminent services. Of these it is pleasant to recall that Harvard, with its degree of Doctor of Laws in 1872, was the first. Martineau was sixty-seven years old when he received his first academic degree, and it was from a foreign country. It is hardly possible that during all these years he had been unobserved by the academic senates of his native land. It is more probable that honors were withheld because he was a dissenter from the established church and prevailing theology. But when America and Holland had set the example, Great Britain, perhaps with something of shame, also made her tardy acknowledgments. Edinburgh made him a Doctor of Divinity; Oxford a Doctor of Civil Law; Dublin a Doctor of Literature.

When after fifty-seven years of strenuous intellectual labor, during more than forty of which he had been simultaneously preacher and professor, Martineau laid down his official responsibilities, it might well have been supposed that after such prolonged exertion, he would be content to spend his declining years in the enjoyment of his modest fortune and well-earned leisure. But such was not his intention. Speaking to a group of his former students at an Alumni dinner, at which he was the guest of honor, he said: "I have not yet done with the world or lost one jot of my interest in its persons and affairs. Nor do I wish to turn the remainder of my days into a siesta or holiday. . . . Welcome the disability of age when come it must; but do not invite it by a lazy will."

Martineau had in fact retired in order that he might present the substance of his lectures in compact and systematic volumes. The first of these, bearing the

title of "Types of Ethical Theory" was published in 1885, and the second, entitled "The Study of Religion," was issued in 1888. These massive and stately volumes greatly enhanced Martineau's high reputation, and again the world naturally supposed that this wonderful old man's work was at last ended. But no; he still had unexpressed convictions and a burden upon his soul to give them voice and to justify them at the bar of scholarship and reason. Martineau was eighty-five years old when his last great book, "The Seat of Authority," was published. Martineau affirms that the seat of authority for every man is not the church or the Bible, but his own enlightened reason and quickened conscience. This book more than any other of his works has aroused controversy. By some it is looked upon as the crown and consummation of all Martineau's achievements. By others it is regarded as a dreadful mistake by which he has injured religion and forfeited his place among the leaders of Christian thought and examples of Christian faith and virtue. Some of his warm and life-long friends were alienated. For example, his former pupil, R. H. Hutton, the gifted essayist and critic, who thought his "Study of Religion" an almost perfect book, declaimed with passionate vehemence against "The Seat of Authority" as "singularly keen, and singularly, unreasonably skeptical."

Alfred Tennyson, also Martineau's devoted admirer, who held substantially the same theological opinions, believed that it was a mistake and almost a crime to express them with such directness and emphasis as Martineau had employed in this, the most popular of his works. Tennyson had long before written "In Memoriam" to warn men against dis-

turbing the simple faith of the uneducated. In solemn and beautiful words the great poet cautions the critic against any presentation of views that would perplex and pain good women in their devotions. He says to the revolutionizing theologian:

“O thou that after toil and storm
Mayst seem to have reached a purer air,
Whose faith has centre everywhere,
Nor cares to fix itself to form,
Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadow's hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.
Her faith through form is pure as thine,
Her hands are quicker unto good:
Oh, sacred be the flesh and blood
To which she links a truth divine!”

Such is Tennyson's poetic plea for leaving the popular conception of the deity of Jesus undisturbed; and this was the attitude that he himself maintained to the end of his life. He regretted that Martineau had departed from it. Let us, however, hear Martineau in his own behalf. Writing to an old pupil about the “Seat of Authority” at the time of its publication, he said: “The insensible changes of thought induced by experience and reflection had so accumulated during a long life that the growing total of my erroneous teachings in the past became a burden on my conscience and I have felt it a duty, ere I leave those to whom my words are spoken, to correct whatever might mislead, and render a report as true as I can make it at the latest date.”

Is it or is it not right to suppress what you believe to be true? Tennyson thought it was — Mar-

tineau thought it was not. Perhaps, the explanation of their difference of opinion is to be found in the fact that one was a poet and the other a philosopher. Tennyson thought in figures of speech. He needed symbols and found satisfaction in them. They were to him more profound and precious than abstract statements. Martineau was a philosopher. He felt that religion could not rest on literature or history, but must prove its reality in the nature of the soul, in the intuitive and universal faculties of man. These are his words: "Faith in our own faculties, is at the very basis of all knowledge and belief. . . . Each one of our own natural powers is to be implicitly trusted within its own sphere, and not beyond it; the senses, as reporters of the outward world; the understanding in the ascertainment of laws and the interpretation of nature; the reason and conscience, in the ordering of life, the discernment of God and the following of religion. Whoever tries to shake their authority, as the ultimate appeal in their several concerns, though he may think himself a saint, is in fact an infidel. Whoever pretends that anything can be above them — be it a book or a church — is secretly cutting up all beliefs by the roots. . . . Turn the matter as we may, it will appear that the fullest, most unqualified admission of a moral and rational nature in man whose decisions no external power can overrule, and which constitutes God's ever open court for trying the claims of Scripture and prophecy, no less than of philosophy, is the prime requisite of all devout faith; without which, duty loses its sacredness, revelation its significance and God himself his authority."

In the "Seat of Authority" Martineau gives co-

gent reasons for his belief that the fourth gospel was not written by the apostle John and is not historic but poetic; he shows also that there is a very large legendary element in the first three evangelical records. He says: "From the person of Jesus everything official attached to him by evangelists or divines has fallen away. When they put false robes upon him, they were leading him to death. The pomp of royal lineage and fulfilled prediction, the prerogative of King, of priest, of judge, the advent with the retinue of angels on the clouds of heaven, are but deforming investitures. . . . Jesus is simply the divine flower of humanity, blossoming after ages of spiritual growth." Was God in Christ? Yes, says Martineau, but God is also in humanity. "The incarnation, thus extended from the person of Christ to the nature of man, may fitly be called the central mystery of revealed religion."

In regard to the moral law Martineau, in a strain of lofty eloquence, speaks thus: "The rule of right, the symmetries of character, the requirements of perfection, are no provincialisms of this planet: they are known among the stars: they reign beyond Orion and the Southern Cross: they are wherever the Universal Spirit is; and no subject mind, though it fly on one track for ever, can escape beyond their bounds."

"Martineau was a mystic but his mysticism was balanced by his reason and held in check by his conscience. . . . Not to lose his faculties, but to have God shining through them, was his great desire." He said: "I pretend not to draw the untraceable line that separates the being of God from ours — God's inspiration is perennial; and he never ceases to work within us, if we consent to will and to do his

good pleasure. He befriends our moral efforts; encourages us to maintain our resolute fidelity and truth; accepts our co-operation with his designs against all evil — Finding a Holy of Holies within us, we need not curiously ask whether its secret voices are of ourselves or the Father."

And so to the last the great philosopher listens like a little child to the voice of God in the soul.

The service which Martineau rendered by his upright, laborious, heroic life and especially by his final and supreme work, "The Seat of Authority," can hardly be overestimated. A young or an unlearned person who, trusting the intuitions of his soul, revolts against an unreasonable and cruel theology, is likely to be told that he is presumptuous in meddling with questions beyond his scholarship and too high for his understanding. Against the slings and arrows of orthodox denunciation the unlearned may take refuge beneath the broad and well-tempered shield of Martineau. The last century produced no happier combination of the great qualities desirable in a theologian than Martineau possessed, a strong, clear intellect, a wide, deep scholarship, a careful logical training, a judicial temper, a devout and reverent heart; yet this man was radical to the core.

Martineau the philosopher has done much by his writings. Martineau the man has done more by his life. It is inspiring to find a theologian eighty-five years old whose mind is not dim, whose natural force is not abated, who writes at that patriarchal age with all the clearness and vigor of a man in his prime. Even beyond this age we can follow him with admiration. At ninety-two years of age he wrote that he had not desired old age, but God had given it to him,

and he had found it something to be thankful for, something "deepening instead of impairing the supreme interest and significance of life."

But the longest life terminates at last. At ninety-five the great preacher, teacher and author passed to his heavenly reward. "Death," said he, "is God's method of colonizing; the transition from this mother country of our race to the fairer and newer world of our emigration. The grave can bury no affections, but only the mortal and familiar shape of their object. We may regard it not with passionate hate, but with quiet reverence. It is a divine message from above, not an invasion from the abyss beneath. It is a rainbow gleam that descends through tears, without which we should not know the various beauties that are woven into the pure light of life."

LONGFELLOW

LONGFELLOW

Oliver Wendell Holmes humorously advises those who wish to succeed in life to be very careful in the choice of their ancestors. Continuing for a moment this audacious fancy, we may say that Longfellow was most judicious in choosing his line of descent. His great-grandfather was a blacksmith, and put iron into the blood and tenacity into the purpose of his descendants. His grandfather struggled hard to get an education, became a school teacher and instilled ambition and love of learning into his children. The poet's father was a lawyer who taught his son to be neat and exact in all his habits, to work systematically, to reason logically and to express his thoughts with clearness and propriety.

Longfellow's pedigree on his father's side had been rising in intelligence and refinement for three generations yet without losing strength and ambition. On his mother's side the poet was equally fortunate in the union of gentleness with power. Altogether the first thing that is to be said of him is that he was what the Greeks called Euphues, a well-born man.

Longfellow had a singularly receptive nature. His mind was one of those rich soils in which every experience of life was seed for thought and sooner or later produced some rich fruit.

His admiration for his sturdy great-grandfather is manifested not only in the noble poem *The Village Blacksmith*, but also in the description of Basil in *Evangeline*, and in *The Building of the Ship*, and in

the manner in which Longfellow everywhere speaks of the value and dignity of manual labor.

The poet's father was named Stephen. His parents named him after the first Christian martyr to indicate their desire that he might grow up to be an earnest and aggressive Christian, and their prayer and faith were not in vain. Stephen Longfellow was a college classmate and life-long friend of William E. Channing, and one of the founders, and the first vice-president, of the American Unitarian Association. His son Samuel became an eminent Unitarian minister who displayed in his sermons the same graces of style and purity and elevation of thought that characterized the poetry of his more famous brother. Samuel Longfellow was himself a poet, also his brother's biographer, and tells us that Henry Longfellow, both at church and at home, was nurtured in the doctrine and spirit of Unitarianism. These facts enable us to understand the moral purity and deep religious feeling which everywhere pervade Longfellow's writings.

Longfellow was a precocious boy who "lisp'd in numbers." At thirteen he published his first verses in local newspapers, at fourteen he entered college, at eighteen he graduated with honor, and was at once elected to the professorship of modern languages in Bowdoin on condition that he should prepare himself for his duties by graduate study in Europe. He accepted the offer with enthusiasm and spent three years in France, Italy, Spain and Germany. Returning to the United States, he entered at the early age of twenty-two upon his duties as professor. The languages and literatures of continental Europe had not previously been taught in Bowdoin, and Longfellow

had to write his own grammars, select his own authors and edit his own text-books, all of which work he did with great industry and excellent judgment.

On the resignation of George Ticknor, Longfellow was invited to the professorship of Modern Languages in Harvard University. He accepted, and began his duties there in 1836. The demands of his chair were not burdensome to him. He had several assistants by whom the elements of the languages were taught and the drudgery of correcting exercises and reading examination papers was done, while Longfellow gave only a general superintendence and delivered stated courses of lectures. Under these favorable conditions much of Longfellow's best literary work was done during the eighteen years of his Harvard professorship.

In 1839, at the age of 32, he published his first volume of poetry, under the title, *Voices of the Night*. Longfellow was young, healthy, and in the high tide of professional prosperity; hence the gloomy title and the serious contents of this volume may seem surprising. Yet the heart knoweth its own bitterness and to a sensitive nature there are innumerable occasions of sympathetic as well as personal sorrow in this world of probation and mystery. It must be remembered too that Longfellow thus early suffered the most painful of all bereavements in the death of his young wife. The *Prelude* to this volume is the key to Longfellow's poetry. He is not a romancer, not primarily an artist; he is a brother man, a sympathizing friend, a moral helper and teacher. The source of life inspiration is not the fairy land of the imagination, but human life with its actual joys and sorrows. The poet tells us of a vision he had in the

forest and of his dedication to serious poetry in these words:

“The green trees whispered low and mild;
It was a sound of joy!
They were my playmates when a child,
And rocked me in their arms so wild!
Still they looked at me and smiled,
As if I were a boy.

Visions of childhood! Stay, Oh stay!
Ye were so sweet and wild!
And distant voices seemed to say,
It cannot be! They pass away!
Other themes demand thy lay;
Thou art no more a child!

Look then into thine heart and write!
Yes, into life's deep stream!
All forms of sorrow and delight,
All solemn Voices of the Night,
That can soothe thee or affright,—
Be these henceforth thy theme.”

There were but seventeen poems in this first volume and most of them became at once and have ever since remained popular favorites. Especially is this true of the famous Psalm of Life, which however has not found equal favor with professors of literature and those who judge poetry primarily by æsthetic standards. Professor Newcomer, of Leland Stanford University, says of it: “Critics will continue to condemn the Psalm of Life for its preaching tone, its incoherent structure, its commonplace ideas, its trite phrases, hazy figures, and borrowed ornaments. But without shutting our eyes to these defects and without maintaining that the poem is of any high order of great-

ness, it is still possible to enjoy it and to understand why it has made such a wide and deep impression. It is sound at heart. So simple and melodious as to sing itself into the memory, it breathes at the same time an ardent courage and a cheerful faith . . . It seems as useless to test it like a more ambitious poem, by the ordinary canons of criticism as it would be to test thus a religious hymn that has fixed itself in the affections of a whole people. We can pardon Longfellow's fondness for exclamation points and pretty figures of speech when we contemplate the large result. Nor if, after we have learned to like such things as 'footprints on the sands of time,' we find that our poetic education is not complete until Tennyson and Shakespeare and Dante have taught us to dislike them again, should we turn with ingratitude from our first teacher who made the second lesson possible."

Edgar Allan Poe was the earliest and one of the most bitter of Longfellow's detractors; the reason for this attitude is that the two men represent exactly opposite moral and artistic ideals. Contrasts are always instructive. The low ground enables us to perceive the mountain. The darkness of night makes the light of day seem doubly glorious, the cold of winter makes us appreciate more the genial warmth of summer, every form of beauty receives an added charm by a background of deformity, and every moral virtue is set in relief by the presence of moral defects. A brief comparison between Poe and Longfellow will perhaps help us to a better understanding of both these great poets. I make it because it has become a sort of fashion or fad among certain critics to exalt Poe and depreciate Longfellow. These men

are so captivated by Poe's music that they forget that he had no message, but happily there are old-fashioned people who still think that the primary purpose of poetry is to teach the supreme truths and to aspire men to the noblest actions. It is well in view of the present tendency to eulogize Poe extravagantly and to speak patronizingly of Longfellow to remember the judgment expressed by Lowell in *A Fable for Critics*. He says:

"There comes Poe with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,
Three-fifths of him genius and two-fifths sheer fudge,
Who has written some things quite the best of their
kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the
mind."

Poe had an exquisite gift of versification. His melodies charm the ear. But they do not elevate or strengthen the heart. In his most famous poem, Poe voices his melodious despair thus:

"And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is
sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber
door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is
dreaming,
And the lamplight o'er him streaming throws his shadow
on the floor;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on
the floor
Shall be lifted nevermore!"

Again Poe writes:

“ Alas, alas, for me
The light of life is o'er;
No more, no more, no more,
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree
Or the stricken eagle soar.”

Poe despairs of himself and in consequence of all other men. Poe has no psalm of life but instead he has a dreadful dirge of death. He has a poem called *The Conqueror Worm* in which he writes thus of the drama of human destiny:

“ That motley drama — Oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its phantom chased forevermore
By a crowd that seize it not.
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot,
And much of Madness and more of Sin
And Horror the soul of the plot.

But see amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude:
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes — it writhes! with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out — out are the lights — out all!
And over each quivering form
The curtain a funeral pall
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels all pallid and wan
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, Man,
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.”

Here we have every technical merit that Longfellow's Psalm of Life is said to lack. There are no commonplace ideas, no trite phrases, no undeveloped or mixed figures. There is a body of beauty; but it is without a soul of faith and hope and joy. In contrast with this wail of despair let us look at Longfellow's gospel of hope.

"Tell me not in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way;
But to act that each to-morrow
Find us farther than to-day.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing shall take heart again.

Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."

This is but a simple exhortation in plain and homely words. But if the casket be of lead it contains in it a pearl of great price and deserves to be prized far above any empty box however beautiful. Longfellow said of this poem, "I kept it some time in manuscript, unwilling to show it to anyone, it being a voice from my inmost heart at a time when I was rallying from depression."

Poe wrote a derogatory article entitled, Longfellow and Other Plagiarists, in which he allowed prejudice and jealousy to blind his naturally fine judgment. Longfellow was hurt, but as usual with him made no public reply. Authors differ very much in their attitude toward critics. Pope was extremely sensitive and listened eagerly to every judgment upon his work, and gives his advice to an author in the words:

"Trust not yourself; but your defects to know,
Make use of every friend and every foe."

Wordsworth, on the other hand, trusted his own inspiration implicitly, regarded all hostile criticism as due to ignorance or folly and treated it with lofty contempt. He said of his critics, "My ears are stone deaf to their idle buzz, and my flesh is insensible as iron to their petty stings."

Longfellow was sensitive but not irritable, was strong but not stubborn, and silently profited by the attacks of his critics. When the shell of the oyster is bored through by its enemy it repairs the injury by a precious secretion, and in like manner, to use Emer-

son's fine figure, when Longfellow was wounded by criticism "he mended his shell with pearl." Without weakening the moral content of his verse he continually added to its artistic excellence, and at last became a consummate master who produced in great quantity the only kind of poetry of any real value, that in which true and noble thought is expressed in clear and beautiful language.

None of the faults of incoherence of thought, mixture of figure, or triteness of phrase complained of in The Psalm of Life are chargeable against The Bridge, in which Longfellow seven years later with equal frankness expresses his personal feelings and religious faith. The poem shows not only that Longfellow had improved as an artist, but that he had grown stronger in soul and had a richer and deeper philosophy of life.

"I stood on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church tower.

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

Among the long black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away,

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh, how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear,

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me,

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here."

Longfellow wrote poetry because he was a born poet, and it was as natural for him as for a bird to sing and to soar. Longfellow saw the beauty of every-day life and the heroism of common people. He is an illustration of the poet's power as that power is described by William Watson, who says:

"The poet gathers fruit from every tree,
Yea, grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles he;
Plucked by his hand the meanest weed that grows
Towers to the lily, reddens to the rose."

Longfellow is the best historian of America, the one who, as in an enchanted mirror, pictures not only the outward panorama of events, but reveals also the soul of goodness and beauty they contain. *Hiawatha* weaves into consecutive narrative the legends of the aborigines. The courtship of Miles Standish is the idyl of Puritanism. *Evangeline* is the epic of the colonial period. *Paul Revere's Ride* gives us the spirit of the Revolution. *Elizabeth* is a delightful interpretation of Quaker life in Pennsylvania. The Poems on Slavery give faithful and pathetic pictures of the sorrows and wrongs of the negroes and of the religious faith that sustained these humble children of God in their days of bondage. The poet says:

"Loud he sang the psalms of David!
He a negro and enslaved,
Sang of Israel's victory,
Sang of Zion bright and free.

In that hour when night is calmest,
Sang he from the Hebrew Psalmist,
In a voice so sweet and clear
That I could not choose but hear.

'And the voice of his devotion
Filled my soul with strange emotion;
For its tones by turns were glad
Sweetly solemn, wildly sad."

And twenty years before public sentiment permitted Lincoln to issue his proclamation emancipating the negro, Longfellow had penned this warning:

"There is a poor blind Samson in this land,
Shorn of his strength and bound in bonds of steel,
Who may in some grim revel, raise his hand
And shake the pillars of this commonweal,
Till the vast temple of our liberties
A shapeless mass of wreck and ruin lies."

The hopes and fears of men during the time of the anti-slavery agitation find beautiful and noble expression in *The Building of the Ship*, ending with the patriotic prayer that Lincoln used to repeat with tears in his eyes:

"Sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast and sail and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!

Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,— are all with thee!"

Longfellow wrote from boyhood to old age with unflagging energy, and more than five hundred poems attest the fertility of his mind and exhibit the varied graces of his style. He says:

"I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend."

Very many of Longfellow's poems are loved by children and treasured in the hearts of men and women; but two poems stand apart from the others as his supreme achievement, the most loved and admired of all his writing, *Evangeline* and *Hiawatha*. I can take space only to comment upon the first of these. I need not detail the familiar story of the expulsion of the French settlers from Nova Scotia and the separation of *Evangeline* from her intended husband Gabriel on the day after their betrothal, and how the pledged husband and wife sought each other in vain for many years, and at last met in a Philadel-

phia hospital where Gabriel, a dying man, was attended by Evangeline, as a sister of mercy. A few of the opening lines will serve to call to mind the measure of the poem and the setting of the story.

“ This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and
the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss and in garments green, indistinct
in the twilight,
Stands like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their
bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks and in accents disconsolate answers the wail
of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts
that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the
voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian
farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the
woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth but reflecting the image
of heaven?

Waste are those pleasant farms and the farmers forever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves when the mighty blasts
of October
Seize them and whirl them aloft and sprinkle them far
o’er the ocean,
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village
of Grand-Pré!

Ye who believe in affection that hopes and endures and
is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's
devotion,
List to the mournful tradition, still sung by the pines
of the forest;
List to the Tale of Love in Acadia, home of the happy."

The tale of mutual and warm affection, constant amid all changes, is the most pleasing type of the love story. The old folk-lore tales of handsome princes and Cinderellas usually end with "So they were married and lived happily ever after," and the lower types of the novel commonly dispose of their lovers in much the same manner. But the poets show a deeper insight, and in accordance with the facts of life exhibit greater varieties of character and fortune. The greatest poet of all has made an unhappy lover say:

"Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But either it was different in blood
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends,
Or if there was a sympathy in choice,
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collied night
That in a spleen unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say 'Behold!'
The jaws of darkness do devour it up;
So quick bright things come to confusion."

Adversity furnishes a nobler background for virtue than prosperity can, for, as Bacon says, the virtue of prosperity is temperance and that of adversity is

fortitude. One of the purposes of poetry is to purify and elevate the mind, and this can often be done best by showing us the effect of great suffering upon a noble nature. Such is the purpose and such the effect of *Evangeline*. After a happy girlhood she was tried by a life-long sorrow.

“Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.”

Yet though she and her lover were disappointed in their earthly hopes, her soul — and his too we may infer — were purified and chastened into the highest beauty of which nature is capable. It adds to the beauty and pathos of the story that she should be represented more fully than Gabriel in the mutual search. If he had been indifferent, it would have saddened us to see so much devotion bestowed upon one unworthy of it. If his jealous search had been followed in detail, substantially the same feelings and incidents must have been related twice, and the result would have been a divided and diminished interest in each character. We get only glimpses of him, but every glimpse is pleasant. He had left home because he was “weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,” and when *Evangeline* tells her sorrows to the good mission priest, he says:

“Gabriel

Told me this same sad tale, then arose and continued his journey.”

The interest and the nobility of the story are heightened because the love that fills the heart of the heroine

and sustains her in her long toils is a pure and spiritual and not an earthly and passionate affection. Its stay and support are found in pious duty — she was a betrothed woman — as well as in natural inclination. Evangeline was not driven to religion by sorrow. Her nature was essentially pure and spiritual and at the very outset of the poem we are told that, while she was always fair to behold,

“A celestial brightness, a more ethereal beauty
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when after
confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God’s benediction
upon her.”

It is in accordance with her deeply religious spirit that her most trusted counsellor should be her father confessor. Others advised her to forget Gabriel and accept another suitor; but Evangeline answered serenely and sadly, “I cannot.”

“Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand and
not elsewhere —
For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in
darkness —”

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father confessor, said with a smile, “O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!” and then he bids the others

“Talk not of wasted affection,—affection never was
wasted;
If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full
of refreshment.”

To impress it more fully upon us that religion was the source of her strength, Longfellow brings in a second priest, a counterpart of Father Felician in pious zeal and human sympathy. This good missionary to the Indians says to her: "Have faith and thy prayer will be answered!" When she reluctantly abandons the fruitless search for her lover, and devotes herself to works of charity, she desires to make them more efficacious by uniting with them the consolation of faith. It was as a Sister of Mercy that she ministered to the sick and the poor, and according to the poet's beautiful figure —

"So was her love diffused, but, like to some odorous
spices,
Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with
aroma;
Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow,
Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her
Saviour."

The metre of *Evangeline*, an imitation of the Greek hexameter, is rare in English poetry, and to have made it popular must be considered a very notable artistic achievement. Longfellow avails himself of all the sixteen variations which the classic hexameter verse admits, and so delicate is his sense of melody and time that whether a line contains a preponderance of dactyls or spondees, the ear is alike satisfied. The first line of the poem contains five, the second line four and the third line only two dactyls; yet owing to the greater emphasis on certain syllables in the shorter lines, the total volume of sound is equal and the time equivalent is perfect. Judged by the rules of English prosody, I do not think there is a

really defective line in the whole poem. I thought at first that the verse

"Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark mountains"

was indefensibly bad, but I found that the accent in "Ozark" should be placed on the second syllable and then the difficulty is measurably removed and the line may perhaps stand upon its merits or at worst may avail itself of the legitimate apology that proper names are often tractable to metrical rules. Yet as was to have been expected his experiment was condemned by some and only faintly praised by others. Poe was among those who disapproved; but Longfellow made no public reply. A trifling circumstance shows, however, that Longfellow could not immediately dismiss Poe's unjust attack from his thoughts. Longfellow, like many other poets, had a habit of making illustrative verses. Coleridge had defined the difference between the hexameter and the pentameter by the simile of a fountain. He says:

"In the hexameter rises the fountains silver column,
In the pentameter aye falling in melody back."

Longfellow, making a parody of this, says:

"In the hexameter sings serenely a Harvard professor,
In the pentameter him damns the censorious Poe."

The Earl of Derby also was an adverse critic, and maintained that the Greek hexameter could not be properly represented in English, and the most suitable measure for an English epic was the iambic pentameter. The earl had translated the Iliad of Homer into English and had used the measure he championed, and this fact enabled Longfellow to make a very neat and effective reply. He selected as an illustration the

concluding line of the account of the burial of Hector, which in Derby's version is as follows:

"Such were the rites to glorious Hector paid."

Now, said Longfellow in substance, commenting on this, Is it not strange that a man after whom the greatest horse race in the world is named, in describing the funeral of a man who in Homer is especially spoken of as a horseman, should omit the distinctive Homeric adjective horsetamer. If, instead of using the iambic pentameter, he had used the dactylic hexameter with its greater range, he could have translated Homer exactly, and said:

"Such were the funeral rites of Hector, the tamer of horses."

The general public cared nothing for the controversy of critics and scholars about the possibility of reproducing Greek hexameter in English. To the common ear the verse of Evangeline is sonorous and sweet and exactly suited to the pathetic story it relates.

Nor should one in commenting upon the elements which produce the beautiful harmonies of the poem fail to remark upon the ever present but never obtrusive alliteration. Usually there is but a single repetition of an initial letter, but occasionally as in the following lines we find a double alliteration:

"Round and red as the harvest moon through the mists
of the marshes"

or in

"Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine,"

or again

"Fires that blast and blight and winds that are weary
with travel."

Longfellow in *Evangeline* displays a power of adapting sound to sense not inferior to that of Poe himself. The most dramatic episode in the story is that in which the lovers pass each other without knowing it in the broad Mississippi.

"Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along invited to slumber.
Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travelers slumbered."

But while *Evangeline* and her party are thus sleeping,

"Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
Northward its prow was turned to the land of the bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
Gabriel was it who weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
Sought in the western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.
Swiftly they glided close under the lee of the island,

But by the opposite bank and behind a screen of palmettos,
So that they saw not the boat where it lay concealed in the willows;
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen were the sleepers."

How perfectly deep sleep is expressed in the very sound of the words in the line:

"Tired with their midnight toil the weary travelers slumbered,"

and how perfectly the tragic swiftness with which Gabriel's boat passed is echoed by the short and hurried syllables:

"Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water."

To recur to more general considerations. The deep pathos of this tale of sorrow is singularly heightened by its strong contrasts; the contrast between the "homes of peace and contentment" of the simple Acadian farmer and the ruined village of the poor exiles:

"Scattered like dust and leaves when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean."

Even more pathetic is the contrast between the happy betrothal of the youthful lovers and the sad and momentary re-union of the long separated pair.

So far as I can see, the poet has availed himself of all the elements of interest that naturally belong to the subject except one. There was an opportunity

to give a picture of the life of a military camp and to contrast the innocence of the Acadian peasants with the brutal vices of soldiers. But such a theme though dramatically tempting was uncongenial to Longfellow. He turned from the darker moral aspects of life and loved to exhibit only whatever is "pure, elevated, lovely and of good report."

There are some readers to whom the sad ending to the story is a discomfort and a stumbling block. They would like it better if the meeting of the lovers had taken place earlier and if a happy married life had been the sequel and compensation of their patient constancy and many sorrows. The same objection has been made to the ending of Shakespeare's tragedy of King Lear. Nahum Tata "rectified the catastrophe so as to have Lear and Cordelia come off triumphant, thus rewarding their virtue with worldly success." Hudson, from whom these words are quoted, justly calls the change an "execrable piece of profanation." Such a change takes from the play the perspective of eternity. It narrows our thoughts to an earthly horizon and implicitly denies man's immortality and God's future rewards and punishments. Earthly life is too short for the whole of man's development and destiny to appear in it. If Longfellow had spoken at length of the rewards of heaven, he would have broken the unity of the poem by introducing a new subject, and would moreover have been presumptuous, for we have only faith and not knowledge. What Browning has done in the intellectual field, Longfellow has done in the moral one. He has left it to God to perfect in the other world a life incomplete in this. The usual happy ending of a love story would, in the special circumstances and char-

acter of this heroine, seem cheap and conventional and take away the tragic power of the poem.

No man, however gifted or fortunate, succeeds equally well in all his undertakings. Longfellow's songs and ballads and tales in verse, his epics of Indian and colonial life were all perfect of their kind and received with marked popular favor. But the poet had a still higher ambition. He recognized the life of Christ as the supreme event in human history and aspired to set it forth in a poem he hoped would be his masterpiece. He wrote in his diary on Nov. 19, 1849, "I long to try a loftier strain, the sublimer song whose broken melodies have for so many years breathed through my soul in the better hours of life and which I trust will ere long unite themselves into a symphony not all unworthy the sublime theme." He called the poem *Christus* and divided the subject into three parts. The first treats of the life of Christ himself; the second part, otherwise called the *Golden Legend*, is a tale of mediæval piety; the third division bears the name of the *New England Tragedies* and describes the Salem witchcraft mania.

The second division of the poem is much the best. It is, indeed, a wonderful panorama of the life of the Middle Ages and shows in swift succession the castle, the farm, the village church, the great cathedral, the monastery and the school. We see the monk at his prayers, or busy in the scriptorium making illuminated copies of precious manuscripts. We see pilgrims traveling in eager throngs to sacred shrines and hear scholars discussing subtle questions of metaphysics, and listen to a quaint play based on the Bible, the only kind of drama which the church then permitted. It is a work of genius, and it has been truly

said that "Longfellow in his *Golden Legend* has entered more closely into the temper of the monk, for good and evil, than ever yet theological writer or historian, though they have given their life's labor to the analysis." The other parts of the poem are less successful, the portraiture of Protestantism being especially inadequate and incomplete.

It is one of the marks of a sound tree that it bears fruit in age, and of a sound mind that it continues active to the end of life. One of the best poems on old age is Longfellow's *Morituri Salutamus*, which was written by request to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the graduation of his class in college. It is a short but interesting tale whose object is to show that:

"Old age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself though in another dress."

Longfellow well illustrated his own theory, for he continued to write almost up to the close of his life. His last poem, *The Bells of San Blas*, was completed on March 15, and after a brief illness the poet's death occurred on the 24th of the same month. He was buried in the beautiful cemetery of Mount Auburn beneath the gently falling snow. His grave is surmounted by a beautiful monument on which arranged in a St. Andrew's cross are the Latin words *Lux, Dux*, words which are equivalent to, I have followed the light, and which we may accept as the principle of Longfellow's life. He was the first American in whose honor a memorial was placed in Westminster Abbey, the home of England's greatest dead; but his noblest and most enduring monument is that which he himself so patiently constructed, that great volume

of pure and elevating poetry, unalloyed by any moral defect, poetry which is the earliest to be understood and loved by children, the delight of maidens and lovers, worthy the study of artists and scholars, the solace of the aged and the comfort of the bereaved; poetry which is taught in every American schoolhouse and treasured in every cultured home, which has increased the knowledge, broadened the sympathies and refined the taste of the whole nation, and constitutes our most distinctive and important contribution to the literature of the world.

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON

No other name now is, it is not likely that any other name ever will be, so prominently and so deeply marked upon this country. Washington was the first President of the United States, and was twice unanimously elected to that supreme office. The capital of the nation is called after him; one of the great western states bears his name, and more than half the states of the Union have Washington counties. His monument at the seat of the Federal authority is the most conspicuous object in the landscape and is, I believe, the highest building of any kind on the American continent. He occupies the most prominent place in all histories of the United States, and the sermons, orations and biographies commemorating his achievements and holding up his character for imitation, are so numerous as to make a literature in themselves. His Farewell Address is looked upon with almost the same veneration as The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

All men of all political parties and of all religious opinions and of all sections of the country, North and South, East and West, differing in almost everything else, agree in regarding Washington as a man of noblest character who rendered his country extraordinary and essential service. A hundred years after his death there is still no dissent from the great eulogy: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." What Moses was to Israel, what Charlemagne was to Germany, what Alfred the Great was to England, that Washington was to

the young republic of the West. Childless according to the flesh, he has a vast spiritual posterity; for so colossal was his personality, so benevolent his character, so great his wisdom, so inestimable the benefits he conferred, so mightily did he guide, counsel and help the infant republic, that the whole nation seemed almost like his household and estate, and he, perhaps more than any other man that ever lived, may be justly called "The father of his country."

The limits of this paper forbid any reference to his ancestry or to many interesting circumstances in connection with his early life; but it may be remarked for the encouragement of those whose opportunities of study are limited that Washington's school education was confined almost entirely to reading, writing, arithmetic, and surveying. He knew no foreign languages, and except for a short visit to the British West Indies, he never left his native land. His knowledge of literature, science, and history was narrow and elementary; but he was endowed by God with a body of extraordinary vigor and a mind of massive power and he had the inestimable advantage of being trained to morality and religion by a wise and virtuous mother.

The mother of Washington, who was left a widow when George was only eleven years old, used every day to gather her children about her and read to them from some solid and instructive book, her chief favorite next to the Bible being "The Contemplations of Sir Matthew Hale," the wise and upright Puritan Judge of whose sayings I remember only this one, which, I suppose, was repeated again and again to Washington and contributed with other influences to form the life-long respect for religion and religious

services Washington always exhibited. The words of Hale to which I refer are:

“A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content
And health for the toils of the morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned, whate’er may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow.”

The Scripture says “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” and I doubt if any really great character was ever developed in any age or in any country without a sense of responsibility to God and the habit of prayer to Him for guidance and strength. Lord Bacon, in one of those wonderful essays which are such a repository of wisdom, uses this language: “They that deny a God destroy man’s nobility; for certainly man is of Kin to the beasts by his body, and if he be not of Kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. Atheism destroys magnanimity and the raising of human nature; for take an example of a dog and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man, who to him is instead of a God or superior being; which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon Divine protection and favor, gathereth a force and faith, which human nature in itself could not obtain.”

Certainly an examination of Washington’s diary and his private correspondence as well as his public utterances and his messages to Congress and other state papers, will show that a deep but unobtrusive piety was the foundation of the scrupulous integrity, of the strict truthfulness, of the unyielding fortitude

and the sublime patience of that extraordinary man. It may certainly be said of him that during those long campaigns when with an unpaid, half-starved and half-clothed army, amid the cabals of envious rivals and the murmurs of an impatient people who did not know the difficulties he dare not make public, lest the enemy, knowing his weakness, should take advantage of it,—it may certainly be said of Washington as truly as of any man that ever lived, “He endured as seeing Him who is invisible.”

Washington’s religion was unobtrusive but it was steadfast and life-long. In the beginning of the French and Indian War, Washington, then only twenty-two years old, but already placed in command of an important expedition, had public prayers in his camp. Irving says: “It certainly was not one of the least striking pictures presented in this wild campaign—the youthful commander, presiding with calm seriousness, over a motley assemblage of half-equipped soldiery, leathern clad hunters and painted savages, and uniting them all in solemn devotion by his own example and demeanor.”

It was the same during all his later campaigns. When after the eight weary years of the Revolutionary War, hostilities were at last suspended, Washington in announcing the fact to his army, gave this general order: “The chaplains with the several brigades will render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his overruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease among the nations.”

When he resigned to Congress his commission as commander-in-chief he said: “I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my offi-

cial life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to Almighty God; and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping." And when he got back to his beloved home at Mount Vernon, from which he had been so long absent, he wrote to his faithful friend General Knox, "I feel now as I conceive a weary traveler must do, who after treading many a weary step with a heavy burden on his shoulders . . . looks back from his housetop and traces, with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling." Washington was an Episcopalian. He was a vestryman in two parishes; the church in one of them was rebuilt on a plan of his own and in a great measure at his expense; at one or other of these churches, although the nearest was seven miles from Mount Vernon, he attended every Sunday when the weather and the roads permitted. Yet Washington though devout and earnest was broadminded and tolerant. He was a friend of Jefferson, and Jefferson, as is well-known, was a religious liberal. In 1822 Jefferson wrote to Channing, "I rejoice that in this country the genuine doctrine of only one God is reviving; and I trust there is not a young man now living who will not die a Unitarian." Washington's judgment was cooler and his temper less aggressive than Jefferson's; but that he was to some extent in accord with him is apparent from one of his letters to Jefferson in which he says: "I am not less ardent in my wish that you may succeed in your toleration in religious matters."

Washington's religion was of a very practical

type. A rough but sensible proverb says, "God helps those who help themselves," and Washington, though he constantly sought God's guidance and help, always exerted his own powers to the utmost. Some of the traits of his character which seem to me to be prominent and to account in large degree for his extraordinary influence over others and the wonderful success of his undertakings, are honesty, truthfulness, order, industry, economy, moderation, and self-control. An epigrammatic poet declares, "Order is Heaven's first law." It would almost seem to have been the first law of George Washington. He became the private surveyor of Lord Fairfax when he was only sixteen, and shortly afterward was appointed a public surveyor by the Colony of Virginia. Many of his surveys were made in the wilderness under great difficulties, but subsequent demarkations made under more favorable conditions have only served to confirm their accuracy. Washington's surveys are still the basis of titles to much landed property.

Many persons who have abundance of time and whose expenditures are small and simple, either keep no accounts and cannot tell what has become of their money, or if they attempt to keep a record of their expenses do it so loosely and irregularly that their footings never balance. But Washington in all his marches and encampments, amid all the dangers and confusions of war, amid the incessant and exhausting labors and burdensome responsibilities of a commander-in-chief, kept in his own handwriting an accurate account of all the money disbursed by him.

Closely allied to the virtue of order is that of economy. Washington was always frugal. He began to save money from his first salary and before he was

of age had accumulated a considerable sum. These virtues of order and economy enabled him to exhibit his disinterestedness. He did not sell but gave his services to his country. For all his long, toilsome and hazardous service in the Revolutionary War, he refused all compensation and received from Congress only a return of the money he had actually expended from his private fortune. Our wonder at Washington's order and exactness becomes the greater when we contrast it with the confusion into which other great men have allowed the pressure of public business to throw their private affairs. William Pitt, prime minister of Great Britain, was Washington's contemporary. Like Washington he was a man of great ability and of lofty patriotism; but though his income was large he died overwhelmed with debt. A biographer justly remarks, "High as his character stands, it would have stood even higher had he united the virtue of frugality to that of disinterestedness." I believe that contempt for this homely virtue of frugality was one of the many causes that contributed to the ignominious downfall of the great Napoleon, who was also Washington's contemporary. Napoleon's genius seemed in some respects far to outshine the solid and unpretending wisdom of Washington; but the weakness and baseness of Napoleon's character, exhibited both in small things and in great, made his eventual overthrow inevitable. It is not more certain that a leaning and lightly built wall will be blown down by a high wind, than that a vain, unprincipled and ambitious man will be overthrown by the storms of his own passion and by the just resentment of those he has wronged. Napoleon "waded through slaughter to a throne," but he was hurled from it for his tyranny.

and spent his last years as a prisoner on a narrow and lonely island so remote as scarcely to seem part of that world from which his crimes and follies exiled him.

Everybody is at times tempted in some peculiarly insidious and fascinating way, and the manner in which he deals with these fair and specious appeals to self-love is the greatest test of character. Jesus refused to buy the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them by doing wrong or conniving at it. The evil suggestions that came to his mind never ripened into evil deeds, for they did not find a congenial soil and fostering warmth. Outward temptations met no inward response, and so died for lack of nourishment. An apostle tells us that God will not suffer those who seek his aid to be tempted above what they are able to bear. Sir Walter Scott in speaking of the power of evil spirits to deceive men and lure them on to destruction, very truly says:

“Seldom have such spirits power
To harm save in the evil hour
When guilt we meditate within
Or harbor unrepented sin.”

In one of the most impressive of his tragedies, Shakespeare has shown how the ambition to be King overpowered the scruples of Macbeth and led him on step by step till he became a traitor and a murderer. When the weird sisters meet Macbeth upon the heath and say to him, “All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be King hereafter!” and then turn from him, Macbeth betrays his inward readiness for temptation by uttering the words, “Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more,” and then as they vanish into air, he says regretfully,

“ Would they had stayed ! ” This was not the spirit in which Washington met temptation. Let us recall some historic facts. Irving in his life of Washington tells us that in 1782 “ great discontents prevailed in the army both among officers and men. . . . There was scarce money sufficient to feed the troops from day to day ; indeed there were days when they were absolutely in want of provisions. The pay of the officers, too, was greatly in arrears ;—and fears began to be expressed that in the event of peace, they would all be disbanded with their claims unliquidated and themselves cast upon the community penniless, and unfitted, by long military habitudes, for the gainful pursuits of peace. At this juncture Washington received an extraordinary letter from Colonel Lewis Nicola, a veteran officer, who had been in habits of intimacy with him. In this letter Nicola attributed all the ills experienced and anticipated by the army and the public at large, to the existing form of government. He condemned a republican form as incompatible with national prosperity, and advised a mixed government, like that of England ; which he had no doubt, on its benefits being properly pointed out, would be readily adopted. ‘ In that case,’ he adds, ‘ it will, I believe, be uncontroverted, that the same abilities which have led us through difficulties apparently insurmountable by human power, to victory and glory ; those qualities that have merited and obtained the universal esteem and veneration of an army, would be most likely to conduct and direct us in the smoother paths of peace. Some people have so connected the idea of tyranny and monarchy, as to find it very difficult to separate them. It may, therefore, be requisite to give the head of such a constitution as I propose, some title appar-

ently more moderate; but if all other things were once adjusted, I believe strong arguments might be produced for admitting the title of *King*, which, I conceive, would be attended with some material advantage.' ”

Washington was possessed at this time with almost unlimited power over the army, and had he been selfish and unprincipled, his ambition might have been inflamed and his hopes aroused by this letter. Now that a century has passed we may think that for Washington to have established a monarchy was impossible; but we must remember that he could not forecast the future and be sure that the then discordant colonies would unite first into a confederation and subsequently into a nation. History, which is man's chief guide in reference to laws and governments, gave no precedent for such a republic as ours. The ancient and mediæval republics were all small; in most cases, their existence had been brief and turbulent. In course of time nearly all of them had fallen into excess and anarchy, and the evils of unbridled license had at last led to a military despotism and imperial sovereignty. In contrast with these factious and insecure republics, men placed the ordered liberty and long continued stability of the British monarchy. Alexander Hamilton and very many able men honestly believed that, owing to the ignorance and shortsightedness of the masses and the difficulty of securing their assent to necessary laws, a pure democracy could not long endure. Washington himself had fears of this kind. In one of the still existing drafts of his Farewell Address to his Fellow Citizens these words occur: “Owing to you as I do a frank and free disclosure of my heart, I shall not conceal from you the belief I entertain that your gov-

ernment as at present constituted is far more likely to prove too feeble than too powerful." (Irving's *Life*, Vol. 5, p. 341.).

Until 1776 the people of the American colonies had lived under a monarchy and whatever grievances they had had, there had never been such depreciation of the currency, such jealousy among the colonies, such disorganization of the government, such poverty and distress as had existed during the first years of independence and democracy. When therefore in 1782 Nicola's letter was received by Washington, had he not been a man of the strongest good sense, of the truest patriotism and the firmest moral principle, he might have paltered with temptation as did Macbeth until sophistries had clouded his intellect and ambitious desires had set his heart on fire.

Irving says that Washington saw that Nicola was but the organ of a military faction, disposed to make the army the basis of an energetic government, and to place him at the head. The suggestion might have tempted a man of meaner ambition; from him it drew the following indignant letter: "With surprise and astonishment, I have read the sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured, Sir, no occurrence in the course of the war has given me more painful sensations, than your information of there being such ideas existing in the army. . . . I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my country. . . . Let me conjure you, if you have any regard for your country, for yourself, or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your mind, and never communicate, as from yourself or any one else, a sentiment of the like nature."

If the world ever again possesses a dramatist equal to Shakespeare in genius, I wish that he might make a companion drama to Macbeth and as Shakespeare has shown how godless ambition led Macbeth to infamy and ruin, so the dramatist that is to be may show how godlike wisdom and virtue led Washington to peace and everlasting honor.

Washington was distinguished even among brave men for his purely physical courage; but his great glory is his moral self-control. As the scripture says, "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city."

We all remember some of the incidents in his military life. We know that at Braddock's defeat two horses were shot under him and that four bullets passed through his clothing and that his coolness and judgment saved the remnant of Braddock's army from destruction. We recall his skill and valor at Trenton in the darkest days of the Revolutionary War, when as the song says:

"Hearts were fainting through the land
And patriot blood ran cold,
The stricken army scarce retained
Three thousand men all told,
While the British arms gleamed everywhere
From Hudson to the Delaware.

Cold and stormy came the night;
The great chief roused his men,
Now up, brave comrades, up and fight
For freedom once again;
The lion sleepeth in his lair
On the left bank of the Delaware.

By the darkling river's side,
Beneath the wintry sky,

From that weak band forlorn and few

There rose the patriot cry,
O, land of freedom, ne'er despair,
We'll die or cross the Delaware!

How the strong oars dash the ice

Amid the tempest's roar,
And how the trumpet voice of Knox
Still cheers them to the shore!
Thus in the freezing midnight air
Those brave hearts crossed the Delaware.

In the morning gray and dim

The shout of battle rose,
The chief led back his valiant men
With a thousand captive foes,
While Trenton shook with the cannon's blare
That told the news o'er the Delaware."

Frederick the Great, himself one of the most skillful and resolute of commanders, said that Washington's campaign in New Jersey is unsurpassed in military annals. But "Peace hath her victories no less than war." How many a man who has borne well the dangers and hardships of war is corrupted by the inactivity and luxury of peace! Washington was as careful, as wise, as industrious, as methodical and as just when at the close of the war he retired to live at Mount Vernon as he had been before.

How many a man who bears adversity well is ruined by prosperity! When the Federal government was formed, the unanimous voice of the country called Washington to the presidency. Everywhere he went the bells rang, the cannon boomed, the flags waved in his honor. Everywhere the people welcomed him with eulogistic addresses, with songs, and with processions.

At Trenton, says his biographer, a triumphal arch had been erected. It was entwined with laurels and bore the inscription, "The defender of the mothers will be the protector of the daughters." A number of young girls, dressed in white and crowned with garlands, strewed flowers before him, singing an ode expressive of their love and gratitude. There is abundant evidence that beneath his exterior calm Washington was a man of great sensibility, and the confidence and good will of the people were very dear to him. It seems to me to be one of the very highest proofs of his nobility of character that in his administration as President he was always willing upon occasion to jeopardize and temporarily forfeit his popularity rather than do what he thought wrong or injurious. Many a father indulges his children to their lasting injury because he cannot resist their importunities. Many a ruler sacrifices his country to his personal ambition or interest. It is one of the commonest devices of monarchs to distract attention from needed domestic reforms by engaging in foreign conquests which will occupy the energies and enlist the patriotism of the people and thus make the task of government easier. Washington was not a man of this careless or unscrupulous type. He had no children of his own, but he took the utmost pains to secure the highest welfare of the stepson and the stepdaughter for whose education, by his marriage with their mother, he became in part responsible. And he ruled the country as he ruled his own household, seeking its real welfare, without regard to consequences to himself. France had been the ally of this country during the Revolutionary War. When during Washington's second administration war broke out between France and Great Britain,

there was a tremendous, and as it seemed, an irresistible agitation in the United States in favor of an alliance with France. It was urged that the Republic of the New World ought to help the newly proclaimed, the solitary and struggling republic of the Old World, that we were bound to assist France in gratitude for her assistance to us, and that it was our duty as American freemen to assist in overthrowing despotism in Europe. All this was very specious; but Washington believed that the interests of this country and the interests of the world required peace, and he refused to widen the area and to intensify the bitterness of the struggle. He knew too well the miseries of war, and maintained a strict neutrality and confined his efforts to protecting the interests of his country even though by so doing he subjected himself to constant reviling and insult by those who charged him with being a British sympathizer and at heart a monarchist. At this time he wrote to Thomas Jefferson, "I did not believe until lately that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that while I was using my utmost exertions . . . to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side only of a subject, and that too in such exaggerated terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, to a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket." In bitterness of soul under these unjust attacks, Washington, we are told by Jefferson, once cried out in a cabinet meeting, "I had rather be in my grave than

in my present situation." Yet much as he desired popularity, much as he suffered from misjudgment and misrepresentation, neither love nor fear ever made him swerve from the path of duty.

The self-control of Washington was not instinctive and easy, as is sometimes supposed. On the contrary his passions were very strong, and his natural temper impetuous and domineering; he attained self-mastery only because though his passions were strong, his will, his reason, and his conscience were stronger still. He literally ruled his own spirit.

Washington's immediate and specific services to his country in peace and war were very great. Independence would doubtless have been attained sooner or later, if he had taken no part in the war. God had determined that in the configuration of the globe. It was impossible, in the nature of the case, that this great continent should be permanently dependent upon a little island across the sea. But that our independence was obtained when it was and as it was, was due in very great degree to the extraordinary combination of great qualities in the commander-in-chief of the American armies, to his almost unparalleled faith, courage, wisdom, patience, industry and fortitude.

Washington guided and assisted the continental congress and the first national congresses in their deliberations, and his spirit is still one of the strongest and most salutary forces in the government of this country. Washington has in spirit sat beside every subsequent occupant of the presidential chair and has been a powerful influence to give dignity to his demeanor, deliberation to his counsels, wisdom to his utterances and virtue to his conduct. Mediocre men in the presidential office have been uplifted, bad men restrained, and good

men have been stimulated to effort and encouraged and strengthened in their virtues, by the recollection of the dignity, the self-control, the patience, the wisdom, the pecuniary disinterestedness and the lofty, unwavering patriotism of the great First President. It was the example of Washington more than any other influence that stimulated the exertions and moulded the character of Abraham Lincoln, our other supreme example of virtue and genius in the presidential chair.

Washington was a man and must be judged by human standards. Undoubtedly there were defects and faults in his character; but to me they seem like the scars made by frost and snow and storm upon the side of a mountain, quite invisible in any proper perspective, being lost in the bulk and majesty of the whole.

In conclusion we may well say with Lord Brougham, "It will be the duty of the historian and the sage of all nations to let no occasion pass of commemorating this illustrious man, and until time shall be no more, a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and virtue, will be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington."

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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One of the chief duties of a man is to love and serve the country which gave him birth and protects and benefits him, and one of the most appropriate and effective ways of inculcating patriotism is to study carefully the lives of our greatest and best men, with the causes that contributed to their success.

It is now forty years since Abraham Lincoln ceased to be a bodily presence. His career has gone into historical perspective. His life has been scrutinized with the utmost care. A great literature of history, biography, poetry and fiction has gathered about his name. Instead of passing into the oblivion which is necessarily the lot of ordinary men, or suffering the eclipse of fame which befalls all those whose greatness is superficial and, so to speak, accidental, his renown has steadily increased, so that by general and almost unanimous consent, he is now considered second only to Washington as an example of greatness of character and greatness of achievement, of sublime patriotism, of profound and intuitive wisdom, of steadfast virtue and of strong and deep religious faith.

The career of Abraham Lincoln is sometimes thoughtlessly looked upon as an exception to all rules; but nature allows no violation of the law of cause and effect, and there is none in the case of the great emancipator. A tree always has roots corresponding to its height, and when a tree attains a great height we must look for the deep and wide-spreading roots which nourished it. The first significant thing that I notice about Abraham Lincoln is that he was descended from Quaker

ancestors who had settled in Pennsylvania and later moved to Virginia. This heredity in itself is almost a guarantee of gentleness and patience, of piety and courage. The adherents of a small, despised and persecuted sect are always people of unusual independence and force of character; the early Quakers were distinguished for these qualities and also for their intelligence and spirituality. George Fox, their founder, was born in 1624 and began to preach in 1648 in the troubled times of the Civil War in England. His two great doctrines are love and spirituality. He was a peace-maker. He taught that a Christian must not fight, but must bear injustice patiently and overcome evil by good. He taught that God spoke directly through the reason and the conscience to every human soul, and that man needed no priest to teach God's will or to offer sacrifices and supplication in his behalf, and that the Scriptures themselves, much as they were to be revered and devoutly as they were to be studied, were nevertheless secondary to the direct communications of God to the soul. These doctrines may be caricatured and abused, but they are nevertheless true and are at the very foundation of spiritual liberty and spiritual progress. They are the doctrines of all the great prophets. They are the essence of the preaching of Jesus, who taught that the word of God should never be made of none effect by tradition, and that no ceremony or sacrament should ever be considered a substitute for a right state of heart and life.

Abraham Lincoln came of a devout and heroic ancestry. He was called Abraham after his grandfather, and because, as his father said, there had always been an Abraham in the Lincoln family. This choice of a name, the name of the father of the faithful, of the

"friend of God," of the man who at the call of duty left home and kindred, testifies to the piety and courage of the obscure ancestor who first used it, whose son so revered his memory that he in turn gave it to his son as a dedication to a life of faith and heroism. His ancestors belonged to the plain middle class, not to that of serfs or day laborers. His grandfather Abraham, a friend of Daniel Boone, was persuaded by the great hunter to emigrate from Virginia to the rich and beautiful valley of the Ohio. He established himself in 1781 or 1782 in Kentucky, and there bought three tracts of land, one of four hundred acres, one of eight hundred, and one of five hundred. Though land in Kentucky at that time was cheap, yet the purchase of so large an amount shows that the emigrant was a man of means and of ambition. If the grandfather was well-to-do we naturally ask how it is that the grandson who grew to fame and power was born less than thirty years after in a log cabin and in extreme poverty. The causes are partly personal and partly social. One who goes into a new country from which Indians have but recently been driven away, on which from time to time they make raids for plunder and revenge, has a very insecure tenure of life. As Grandfather Abraham was plowing in a little clearing he was shot by a revengeful Indian who stole unperceived to the edge of the dense surrounding forest. The dead man left behind him five children, two girls and three boys, of whom Thomas, the youngest, was only six years old. The early settlers in Virginia had brought from England a law of primogeniture, the object of which was to keep landed estates intact and to maintain a territorial aristocracy. This law had passed from Virginia to Kentucky, and thus by the

operation of a landed system, harsh and unnatural at the best, and ludicrously inapplicable to a primitive and democratic community, poor little Thomas was left not merely an orphan but utterly destitute of property. He grew up as a day laborer in the backwoods. He never was able to go to a school, even the humblest, and never even learned to read. But he was skillful with the ax and with the rifle; as a primitive carpenter and a hunter he made a rude but comfortable living, and at twenty-eight years of age wooed and won Nancy Hanks, who, though like himself brought up in the backwoods and accustomed to hardships, yet possessed an innate refinement and had acquired some precious elements of education.

Of these parents in the third year of their married life Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin containing but a single room, possessing but one door and one window, without glass, and with no floor, except the earth beaten hard; and in cabins but little better than this he lived till he was twenty-one years old. His clothing consisted of deerskin trousers, coonskin cap and home-spun shirt and coat. His feet were bare in summer and covered in winter with moccasins or unpolished cow-hide boots; not till he was a grown man did he enjoy the luxury of a pair of stockings. The schoolhouse in which he learned a little reading and writing and arithmetic from teachers who themselves knew only these elementary subjects, was a log cabin. Even this humble school he was able to attend only a few weeks at a time when work was slack; the whole period of his school attendance was scarcely so much as twelve months.

But this only shows us that we need to revise our common ideas, as to what is essential to a good educa-

tion. Abraham Lincoln was taught in early childhood by his intelligent and devoted mother; from her he learned not only to read books, but what is more important, to understand them and love them. He never became a learned man, but he was in the true sense of the word an educated one. His circumstances allowed him to read little; his temperament and his mother's example made him think much. I do not by any means wish to disparage our colleges and universities. They offer great opportunities and are on the whole the best, and for some professions the only, way to success. Yet some who attend them receive little benefit and would have attained a much better discipline on the farm, in the workshop, in the office or in the store. College discipline is often lax and debilitating, and the superabundance of theory and small amount of practice produce indolence and mental dyspepsia. College-bred men in many instances are burdened and crushed by the weight of their learning. Their originality is stifled by their knowledge of innumerable precedents, and their courage broken by their sense of the complexity of things and the difficulties of making radical changes. Colleges are better adapted to produce scholars and prepare men for the ordinary routine of life than to develop commanding geniuses who will themselves create new epochs in literature, in science, in government, in religion. There is some truth in the words of the epigrammatist who says that "Colleges polish pebbles and dim diamonds." The greatest geniuses have not been bred in the close atmosphere and amid the narrow pedantries of the college, but in the great school of human experience and in direct contact with the realities of nature. In the carpenter shop, in the market place and on the farm greater men have been

bred than in any university. Jesus and Shakespeare and Abraham Lincoln rebuke the pride of the professional scholar. How paltry and inefficient the gymnasium and the dumb-bell are in comparison with the ax and the plow as a means of physical development, and how paltry and inefficient as a means of intellectual and moral development are all academic theorizing and historical study compared with the wrestle with great current problems and the burdens of actual administration!

Abraham Lincoln did not reach his great eminence and achieve his great success by any miracle. He did not succeed in spite of his poverty and hardship and limited education, but because of them. He grew strong by constant contact with the strength-giving, vitalizing earth. The air is the very source of life and all day long in the field and forest and all night long in the rude cabin through whose open door and window and wide chimney and loosely fitted logs the winds blew, the boy filled his lungs with the pure and life-giving breath of heaven. Strenuous daily toil with the ax and the plow gave him a keen appetite which he was able to satisfy with abundance of wholesome food; and in these healthful conditions, what wonder is it that he grew to lofty stature and to mighty strength of body, and that upon this firm physical basis he developed a singularly clear intellect and a patient and steadfast will!

Nor must we forget that though his books were few in number, they were very choice in quality. He began to read the Bible in early childhood; this paramount volume, the noblest literature of all the ages, purified his heart, enlarged his mind, and by its clear and simple yet beautiful and sublime language afforded

the best possible model of English style. So deeply were the mind and heart of Lincoln impressed by his early familiarity with the Bible, that to the end of his life he wrote and spoke on great occasions with the solemnity and sublimity of a Hebrew prophet. He knew the best, almost all that is worth knowing, of Hebrew literature; but his acquaintance with the other great literatures of antiquity was very slight. Yet the backwoods boy had some insight into the wisdom of the Greeks; he read and pondered over and committed to memory the fables of Æsop, which, as they enforce lessons of prudence and worldly policy, are admirably adapted to supplement the sublimer spiritual teachings of the Bible.

Moreover, he early became acquainted with Shakespeare. In the mighty mirror of his dramas he saw the world reflected and learned both the outer course of events and the inner workings of the heart. He read also the Pilgrim's Progress, the wonderful allegory of the Christian life, the sublime prose poem of spiritual adventure. Lastly, even in boyhood, Lincoln became familiar with the life of Washington and with the history of the United States.

What an education he had! Few books, but all of them the best, and all of them read with closest attention by an eager mind and with deepest sympathy by a loving heart. How much better such an education is than cramming a jaded, reluctant, satiated mind with innumerable second rate, third rate, fifth rate and tenth rate books! Abraham Lincoln was by native endowment, by the immediate grace of God, a King of men; he walked with royal dignity, wearing a few massive ornaments made of solid gold, not trivialized by a multitude of the cheap and tawdry trinkets of a frivolous scholarship.

Yet with all his mighty strength of body and his clear, logical intellect, Abraham Lincoln had a singularly tender heart. He could not bear to see any living creature suffer needless and remediable pain. Though a backwoodsman, he was a poor hunter and never shot any animal except for necessary food. Many anecdotes are told of his tenderness to bird and beast. When he had become a busy lawyer, and was riding the circuit, he fell behind his companions in the journey to replace in their nest some little birds that had fallen to the ground. He once waded through an ice-cold stream to carry a little whining dog over. He once dismounted from his horse and soiled his hands and his clothes with mud to release a pig that had been caught in a rail fence. He interposed his own body between a poor Indian and a lot of angry men who were threatening to shoot him.

Like all men of extremely sensitive and tender heart, Lincoln was at times subject to deep melancholy. He gave way to passionate grief when Anne Rutledge, his first love, died, and throwing himself in despair upon her grave, he lay there all night despite the falling rain. He subsequently wrote to his friend Speed: "I would be more than willing to die, but I have an irrepressible desire to live until I can be assured that the world is a little better for my having lived in it."

All the public life of Abraham Lincoln must be interpreted by these personal characteristics. From early childhood he was looked on by his neighbors as honest and truthful and pure and kind, as studious and thoughtful, as a convincing speaker and natural leader of men.

At eighteen years of age he began to write occasional articles for the newspapers, at twenty-one he left the

farm for the village store, at twenty-three he was made captain of a militia company and in the Black Hawk war gained a little knowledge of military life. Subsequently, in imitation of Washington, he studied and practised land surveying. At twenty-five he was elected a member of the legislature of Illinois, in which he served with ability four consecutive terms. At thirty-eight he was a representative in the lower house of the Congress of the United States.

From boyhood it had been his ambition to become a lawyer, and from the time of his admission to the bar he had practised his profession in the intervals of the sessions of the legislature. After ten years of political life, he grew tired of it and devoted himself for the next six years exclusively and assiduously to practise at the bar, until the aggressions of the Southern slaveholders aroused his conscience, appealed to his sympathies, and stirred his patriotic indignation. In 1850 the Fugitive Slave law, by which northern courts and officers were compelled to returned escaped slaves to their masters, was enacted; in 1854 the Missouri Compromise by which slavery was restricted to the southern states was repealed and the Kansas-Nebraska bill making slavery optional in those states was passed; as a climax in 1857 in the Dred Scott case the Supreme Court of the United States decided that residence in a free state did not confer freedom upon a negro and thus slavery was in effect made national.

In his boyhood and early manhood Abraham Lincoln had made two trading voyages down the Mississippi to New Orleans, and on his second visit to the Southern city had seen men and women offered for sale in the open market like horses or cattle. The repugnance he then and there conceived for the slave system never

left him; and at the outset of his career he declared in characteristically picturesque and eloquent words that he would speak for freedom against slavery until everywhere in all this broad land, the sun shall shine, the rain shall fall and the wind shall blow upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil.

Lincoln never judged moral questions in the light of temporary expediency, but tested them by the eternal principles of righteousness. He summed up his views on slavery by saying: "If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong."

The most able and eloquent of the northern defenders of slavery was Stephen A. Douglas. When in 1858 Douglas was a candidate for re-election to the senate of the United States, Lincoln challenged him to a series of public debates. Never before had there been so equal and so exciting a political duel. "The farmers left their harvest fields, mechanics closed their shops, merchants locked their stores. At the first meeting 20,000 eager listeners were present." It was in this debate that Lincoln used the oft-quoted words: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved,—I do not expect the house to fall,—but I do expect that it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other." Lincoln utterly vanquished Douglas in debate and became the acknowledged leader of the new Republican party. A year later when the whole country was agitated by the tragic outcome of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry, Mr. Lincoln was called to speak at a great meeting in New York city. He was introduced by William Cullen Bryant, who thirty years before had

predicted his greatness. He made a speech so clear in its logic and so noble in its spirit that it completely captivated the vast audience. When Lincoln concluded with the words, "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it," many of the most notable leaders of public opinion of the east were convinced that the prairies of Illinois had produced the fitting leader for the approaching crisis, and were not chagrined or even astonished when a few months later at Chicago Abraham Lincoln was nominated for the presidency amid tremendous enthusiasm.

Yet even in the North there were many who did not approve of his nomination. Mr. Lincoln had never declared himself an Abolitionist. On the contrary he had said to the slaveholders of the South, "I acknowledge your rights and my obligations under the Constitution in regard to your slaves. I confess that I hate to see the poor creatures hunted down and caught and carried back to their stripes and unrequited toil, but I keep quiet. You ought to appreciate how much the great body of the people of the North crucify their feelings in order to maintain their loyalty to the Constitution and the Union. I *do* oppose the extension of slavery because my judgment and feelings so prompt me, and I am under no obligations to the contrary. As a nation we began by declaring 'all men are created equal'; we now practically read it 'all men are created equal except negroes.' When it comes to making wholesale exceptions I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty, where despotism can be taken pure without the base alloy of hypocrisy."

This position was not satisfactory to the extremists

of either party. Wendell Phillips, to his lasting disgrace, asked sneeringly, "Who is this huckster in politics? Who is this slave hound of Illinois?"

When the blindness and the anger of the Abolitionists of the North were so extreme, it is easy to imagine that there would be an equal blindness and misconception of an opposite kind in the South. In vain Lincoln tried to conciliate and win back the states which had seceded when his election was announced. In his inaugural address he said: "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors.—We are not enemies but friends." Lincoln continued the United States mail service in the South and hoped that if he were patient and allowed time for misunderstandings to be cleared away and passions to cool, the seceded states would return to their allegiance. But it was not to be. Fort Sumter was fired on and the war was begun a month after the inauguration.

Reluctantly Lincoln called on Congress to give him men and money with which to put down the rebellion. Both were freely voted and the people approved what Congress had done. The South was better prepared for war and won victories which caused great fear and discouragement in the North. The loss of life was great. The burden of taxation grew heavy. The currency steadily depreciated. The number of those who were willing to let the South go in order to restore peace steadily increased. They declared that only the worst of tyrants would attempt to force eight millions of people to submit to his government. The President's labor and responsibility was almost beyond hu-

man power to bear. His raven hair turned gray, the lines of care upon his sad face deepened, his strong form bent as under the weight of years, he became indeed "a man of sorrows."

Yet good men, in their ignorance and impatience, added to his heavy burdens by their denunciations of his cautious policy and by their clamors for the immediate emancipation of the slaves. It was Lincoln's sagacious policy to conciliate the strong border states lest they too should join the Confederacy and so increase the resources of the South as to make northern victory hopeless. But his cautious wisdom was misunderstood, and he was subject to constant and bitter attacks which for a long time he thought it best to bear in silence. At length, however, he was compelled to answer and he did so in a letter to Horace Greeley, who in his editorials in the New York Tribune had been one of the President's most vehement critics. Mr. Lincoln wrote: "My paramount object is to save the Union, and not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save this Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I believe I am doing hurt to the cause; and I shall do more whenever I believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views as fast as they shall appear to be true views. I have here stated my purpose according to my views of official duty, and I intend no

modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free."

No man ever surpassed and few men have equalled Mr. Lincoln in the power of clear and convincing statement, and it is not surprising that amid all detraction he retained the confidence of the mass of the people.

When the Union armies began to gain great victories, when the loyalty of the border states was assured, Mr. Lincoln felt that the time for which he had waited had come and he issued his famous proclamation emancipating the slaves of owners then in rebellion against the United States; then the nation which had begun the war to save the Union was willing to continue it in the interest of justice and humanity.

To govern a country so large and so populous as ours by manhood suffrage requires much intelligence and virtue in the people; if at any time we are afraid that the people are too ignorant, too thoughtless and too selfish to be trusted in great emergencies, let us turn for encouragement to the record of the second election of Abraham Lincoln.

The sufferings of the war had been great, its burdens were still very heavy, the end was not yet in sight, yet Lincoln received 212 electoral votes and his opponent only 21.

His second inaugural deeply moved the heart and conscience of the nation. He said: "Fondly do we hope, reverently do we pray that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away; yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn by the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, still it must be said, as was said three thousand years ago, the

judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

These sublime and pathetic words are his last counsel. They had hardly fallen from his lips, they had not yet reached the remoter parts of the country, when the strangest tragedy in our history occurred. So dreadful are the possibilities of error, that Abraham Lincoln, the very incarnation of wisdom, of justice and of kindness, was slain as a tyrant.

Only one martyrdom in all history is likely to be fixed more indelibly in the memory of our race. The gentle, patient, heroic man at the hour of his highest greatness was brought to the grave to which all the paths of glory alike lead.

In his case it was literally according to the lines of a solemn poem he was fond of quoting:

The wink of an eye, the draught of a breath
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud;
O why should the spirit of mortal be proud?"

Abraham Lincoln had in pre-eminent degree the great primal virtues of justice and mercy, of patience and gentleness, of love and charity, of wisdom and steadfastness of purpose.

Abridging and adapting the words of Edwin Markham, we may say of him, he had

**"The rectitude and patience of the rocks,
The justice of the rain that falls on all,
The pity of the snow that hides all scars,
The equity of light that shines for all.
He built the rail-pile as he built the state,
The conscience in him testing every stroke,
To make his deed the measure of a man."**

His place is among the greatest men of all ages and nations. His fame is higher than that of any self-aggrandizing and ambitious conqueror, greater even than of a heroic defender of personal rights. It is that purest and noblest of all forms of fame, that of the benefactor of a nation and race.

It is well that the birth of such a man is observed as a public holiday, for the life of Abraham Lincoln is among the very greatest of our national memories and inspirations. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth" and even so a nation's life does not consist primarily in wheat and cotton and coal and wood, but in a healthy, an intelligent, a just and generous and happy population.

In many respects we reckon ourselves, and I think with justice, the foremost nation of the earth, yet we have not by any means conquered all the evils we are able to conquer or attained all the good we are able to attain. But in the future, as in the past, as occasion shall require, God will raise up leaders to inspire and direct his children, and as these leaders look back for their own guidance and inspiration to the great men of former generations, among the purest and wisest and noblest of their examples will be the faithful, patient, wise, God-fearing, God-trusting man from the prairies of Illinois, Abraham Lincoln,





